

# LONDON THE READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

JUNE 1, 1874.]

THE RIGHT OF TRANSLATION?

[IS RESERVED.]

No. 574.—VOL. XXIII.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING MAY 2, 1874.

[PRICE ONE PENNY]



[A STRANGE MEETING.]

## THE DOUBLE BONDAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Lost Coronet," "Elgiva," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

Oh, ever beauteous, ever friendly, tell,  
Is it in heaven a crime to love too well?  
To bear too tender or too firm a heart?  
Is there no bright reunion in the sky  
For those who greatly think and bravely die?  
Why bade ye else, ye powers, the soul aspire  
Above the vulgar flight of low desire?

THERE was a pause, a thrilling silence that spoke louder to each heart than words when those two met.

The wife of Count Albert de Fontane.

The betrothed of Lady Maud Dorrington.

Two whose hearts were secretly—ay, and in all outward innocence of deed or intent—linked to each other, and yet whose fate and whose hands must be for ever parted.

They were indeed placed in circumstances of temptation and danger.

Alone, with no safeguard but the honour and the terror that are powerful engines to enforce duty where nobler principles do not avail—alone, with the past and future thrilling on their souls, with all that agony of the past and despair for the future can inflict on the soul.

There was the present, the tempting present, to console for every such grief, outweigh the sad life which was to be their portion in after days.

Such was the present truth. Such, perhaps, were the thoughts that flashed through the brain of each in the few moments when eye met eye and heart sympathized with heart, as can only be the case when the rapport of an electric attraction exists between two souls.

Laura, as usual with her sex, was the first to speak.

"I did not expect this meeting. I thought you were in England, my lord," she said, with a slight

hauteur in her mien that covered her real emotions as with a veil.

"And I supposed you were in Naples," he said, with a constrained smile. "So we are equal in our surprise. May I hope that we are as identical in our joy at the meeting, Laura?"

She shivered slightly with a presentiment of evil for which she could not herself account.

"I am happy to see an old friend, of course, especially when I am alone among strangers," she said, coldly.

"An 'old friend'!" he repeated. "It is a conventional, heartless, unmeaning phrase. It might apply to any hundred individual you had accidentally known in your childhood. I decline such a distinction, Laura," he said, coldly.

"Then what will you accept?" she asked, with a constrained laugh. "What am I to call you?"

"What will I accept?" he said. "I need scarcely tell you what I have given—what you would return if you felt as I do, Laura."

She knew but too keenly her own erring affections—the dangerous joy of his presence, the constant dwelling on him in her inmost thoughts when absent.

She would have sacrificed years of her life to have been his wife, to have possessed the right to love—to be with him in time and to pray for him in eternity as his own.

But she must hide it, and submit to the reproach of coldness and hard-hearted forgetfulness.

"You do me wrong," she said, quickly. "My regard for you is not so constrained as you make out. But you know in your inmost heart that I should be wicked and mad to confess, even to myself, that anything but such friendly affection could exist between us. I have a husband, you have a wife, or one who will soon possess that title," she added, with a half-piteous look and tone that almost pleaded for a contradiction of the assertion.

But, alas! it was impossible. Sholto Saville could not thus perjure himself even in that agitating hour.

"Is it so?" he burst out, eagerly. "Is it so, Laura? But still you should have some pity on me, when I confess the misery which awaits me. I have broken from the fetters. I have determined to secure a brief respite for peace and happiness," he went on. "A kindly fate has brought us together, and yet you will not even extend to me a kindly word, an assurance of your own joy at the meeting. You are cruel or heartless—I know not what," he added, passionately.

"And you, what of you, Lord Saville?" she returned, sadly. "Are you not unjust to one who dares not risk such a response? Sholto," she added, with a gush of touching pathos in her whole look and tone, "remember I am weaker than you are. I am a woman. I have less to sacrifice perhaps in the world than you. Is it wonderful if I shrink from exposing you to such a fate as I am certain awaits you if your regard for me were suspected? Even now we are in danger. The page who attends me I do not trust," she went on, in a lower tone. "Even this innocent and unexpected meeting may be twisted in his hand to bear a different interpretation from the truth."

"I would strangle him if he played spy and eaves-dropper!" exclaimed Lord Saville, impetuously.

"That would avail little," she replied, with a wan smile. "It would only add to the crime and misery. However, it is an idle jest. Mine is serious, sad earnest."

And a melancholy shake of her head added an undoubted earnestness to her low, subdued tones.

"What do you wish then? Would you have me leave you—bid farewell without word of tenderness or regret?" he said, bitterly.

"Alas, alas! I am too weak to bid you go—to sacrifice this brief last dream of joy," she returned, sadly.

Again there was a brief pause.

They sat side by side on the rustic bench that commanded a glorious view of the ancient city of Rouen and the fair province of Normandy, so like the fertile English land.



But they were all unmindful of the beauties before them—of all but their own sad fate and the gloomy future before them.

The lady was once more the first to break the deep, painful silence between them.

"What is she like? When is it to be, Sholto?" she inquired, in a voice of forced calmness.

It was a true woman's speech. The questions were true feminine anxieties.

But Sholto half-resented the perplexing position in which they placed him.

"If you mean my future bride, she is young and lovely—there can be no doubt about that," he returned. "I have no complaint on that score."

"And you will learn to love her, and to forget poor Laura," she wailed, softly.

"What inconsistent creatures women are!" he said, half angrily. "Only a few moments since and you declared it was a mortal sin for me to love or to wish to be near you; and now you are complaining of the chance that I might learn to love my own wife, and to forget the syren who has possessed my heart," he continued, reproachfully.

"Forgive me! forgive me!" she said, mournfully. "Yes, you say well; I am utterly unreasonable in my desires. I feel that I would keep you over as a dear, as the dearest of friends, and never to have any one come between us to engross your heart. It is an impossible, a selfish dream, and I shall awake from it—oh, yes, it will be a very brief delusion," she said, sadly.

She looked so lovely in her sad, sweet, touching grief, her Oriental eyes had such liquid tenderness in them as the tears stood unbidden in their depths, her lips were so piteous in the sorrowful plaint of their curved beauty, that it must have been a hard and insensible nature that could have remained unmoved.

Sholto loved her deeply, fervently, and the knowledge that the time was at hand when he must be parted from that fair and melancholy being for ever added to the grief and the sympathy between them.

"Dearest, loveliest," he said, passionately, "it is for me to entreat your pardon—I was cruel and selfish to reproach you thus. You are so pure, and yet so loving, that man's cold nature can scarcely appreciate yours," he exclaimed, as he saw the fast-falling tears that only waited these few words of loving tenderness to issue from their depths.

"No, no, Sholto, you did but say true; you did but bring me to a sense of the folly and selfishness of my conduct," she replied, firmly. "Heaven knows I would not have you suffering and unhappy during the remainder of your life, though perhaps it is hard to think that it must be another who must make you blest. Tell me," she added, suddenly, "does she love you? Does she rejoice in her happiness, Sholto?"

He gave a sarcastic smile.

"She likes my title, she likes my estates, and the wealth and the prestige she will enjoy. That is an undoubted, a very tangible love, is it not, Laura?" he replied. "One that will not change."

Her heart gave a leap of joy, for which she reproached herself even as it throbbed. At least there would not be that rivalry—at least she would not have the torture of fancying the fair, young loving bride hanging on each look and smile and caress of her husband, and winning his affection by the force of her own youthful devotion.

Still it was a selfish idea and she saw it.

"It cannot last," she said. "She will learn to love you, Sholto; she cannot help it. And I—I shall pray for you, in another world, if not in this."

"Laura, what mean you?" he exclaimed, suddenly. "Are you not well, my beloved, that you speak thus?"

"I hardly know. I have no ailment that I can describe," she said. "I believe it is but a heart-sickness after all—and that does not kill, does it, Sholto? The more is the pity," she went on, with a faint smile.

"You torture me, Laura. Tell me, is he—your husband—kind? Does he watch over you?" exclaimed Sholto, impetuously.

"Oh, yes, I suppose—nay, I am sure—so," she replied. "He had insisted on my having medical advice before I left Naples, though I scarcely could have told you for what he deemed I could need it; and now, as he is detained in Paris, he has sent me here for greater rest and quiet and fresh air. There can be no stronger proof of his anxiety for me, can there, Sholto?" she continued, anxiously.

"No, I suppose not. I cannot pretend to read his motives; but certainly it would hardly seem that they are anything but a husband's devotion," was the reply. "How long do you expect him to remain in Paris?" he asked, after a brief pause.

"I cannot tell. Perhaps a week, a fortnight, or even a month," she replied, carelessly.

"And I may count on seeing you then—on enjoy-

ing your sweet companionship. I may hear your voice—gaze at you—speak to you while the brief respite lasts?" he asked, clasping her hand passionately to his heart.

She shook her head reprovingly as she drew the small fingers from his.

"Ah, Sholto, what can I say?—what ought I to do?" she sighed, plaintively. "Heaven knows that the joy is the same to me as to yourself, ay, and perhaps far more to my woman's weakness. But what if it were but a prelude to misery? What if there were some terrible retribution for the stolen happiness?"

"Not stolen, Laura," he said, proudly and firmly. "I am an English nobleman, your husband's equal and friend. I would in all honour and good faith guard you, as his wife, from harm. It is not for him to blame should he send you to this lonely spot; and if I happened, by a chance that we could neither of us expect, to be at the same place and endeavour to cheer your loneliness, it shall be openly and in face of day, Laura."

"Yes, yes," she said, "I know. You are right, perhaps, and yet I fear I know not what. And," she continued, fearfully, "see, there is Morton coming towards us with his catlike step and velvet face and smooth voice. I must go now; but do not see him find you here. As you say, our intercourse shall be in the face of day, and encounter and perhaps defy his treachery."

It was just as she said these words that the boy approached.

"The carriage waits, madam. It is getting late and chill. Will it please you to return?" he said, lifting his cap respectfully to Lord Saville.

"Yes," she said, "yes. Farewell, my lord. We shall of course meet again during your stay here."

And as he gave her his arm to the carriage their voices could be distinctly heard in careless talk.

Was Morton deceived?

His cunning smile forbade the idea.

#### CHAPTER XXVIII.

Descend, ye Nines, descend and sing,  
The breathing instruments inspire,  
Wake into voice each silent string,  
And sweep the sounding lyre.  
In a sweetly pleasing strain  
Let the warbling lute complain,  
Now louder and yet louder rise.

GWENDA LORAIN was again at the house which had been purchased for her by Mr. Bolton; again at the pretty domain that was draped in the beautiful if fading colours of autumn in wood and garden.

Perhaps the season tended to a degree of melancholy which was scarcely natural to a betrothed and happy bride.

Perhaps the reaction after the extreme excitement of the past few weeks had something to do with the depression that clouded Gwenda's whole spirits and cast a strange shadow over her brilliant prospects.

But in any case she struggled against it as an absurd and ungrateful caprice.

And, in pursuance of her efforts perhaps, she determined, if possible, to win her guardian's approbation by giving a ball on the ensuing new year's day, as a kind of introduction to the whole neighbourhood on taking her place as the young lady and mistress of Fern Place.

"It cannot be wrong when you are here to act as chaperone, Mrs. Fenton," she said, fretfully, as that lady demurred to the proposal.

And Gwenda paused for the reply which did not come.

"I am moped to death in this large house, with nothing to amuse me, no one as a companion—I mean no one of my own age," she added, seeing a rather reproachful gravity on Mrs. Fenton's face.

"I really have no power to grant such a request, Miss Loraine," replied the chaperone, coldly. "You or I must write to Mr. Bolton to ask his permission before anything can be done. Perhaps," she added, rather sarcastically, "you would be happier in a small, humble house, since you find this so dull and desolate."

"You are very tiresome," returned Gwenda, with a half-proud, half-petish impatience. "It is not that I am discontented. But you must see that the whole place looks but half tenanted, and now that the autumn is getting into winter it is worse every day. I really do wish that some one would come and enliven us a little," she added, peevishly. "There are the Percys, you know; and then too the St. Johns have never been to call since I returned. I will ride over to-day and see about them. I dare say they have no end of fresh music and books to show me."

Mrs. Fenton gave a slight shake of the head.

"I am not quite sure I am doing right," she said, "in allowing you to run so wildly into intimacies and fly about the country in that style, Miss Loraine. Mr. Bolton gave me strict injunctions on

that head, and, besides, Lord and Lady Brunton will not like it, I suspect. Better remain in a safe seclusion at present, my dear."

Gwenda gave an impetuous tap of her little foot in a sort of tattoo on the small velvet cushion as she listened.

"I am not to be imprisoned by Lord Brunton, or any one else, while I am free," she said, haughtily. "If there are reasons for delaying the marriage that would give that power over me, they must just take the consequences. I shall not suffer both ways, I can tell them."

Mrs. Fenton shook her head reprovingly.

"Foolish child! How little you can appreciate your real condition and privileges," she said. "Suppose you were to find the brilliant marriage broken off—suppose some one more able to manage you appeared—what then?"

"Suppose the genii of old were to appear and fly off with Fern Place," returned Gwenda, mockingly. "One idea is about as rational as the other. I would never marry any one but Bernard, of course, if that is what you mean."

"Not altogether; though perhaps in some degree that may be what I meant to convey," returned the lady. "Gwenda, the little school-girl, placed at Madame Macaine's by some mysterious benefactor and guardian, was left there some time before any one appeared to change her destiny. Do you remember those days, my dear?" she went on, more blandly.

Gwenda flushed painfully, perhaps somewhat indignantly, at the unwelcome reminder.

She could not altogether forget the time when she had been taught almost surreptitiously by the kind and zealous signor. She could not forget the cold contempt of Madame Macaine for her unfriended self.

Even now there was fresh in her memory that most memorable day when Mr. Bolton appeared, with the ample power to change her whole condition, and still more when he announced the incredible news of her kinship to that unknown benefactor and relative.

But though the facts were vivid enough in her recollection they were not such as to revive her already dragging spirits.

The present impatience of her nature rebelled against the needless recapitulation of painful memories.

"I really do not see the use of all this, Mrs. Fenton," she said, angrily. "Unless it is merely to vex and mortify me. All that can have no connection with my breaking my engagement with Lord Gwennere, nor any one else appearing to claim me. I suppose you don't think this unknown guardian of my childhood is going to appear as a candidate for my hand, do you?" she added, scornfully.

"I think nothing that is absurd or improbable," returned the lady, calmly. "But all I do wish is to tone down your impatience a little, Miss Loraine, and induce you to submit to the wishes of others, or it is just possible you may one day regret it should your engagement be broken."

"Why should it?" exclaimed Gwenda, impatiently. "What reason have you to speak thus, Mrs. Fenton?"

"Only that which every rational person must feel that such ruptures are by no means without precedent—ay, and will be repeated again and again as long as there is marrying and giving in marriage," said the chaperone, with provoking coolness that acted as a feeder to Gwenda's fiery spirit.

"Perhaps; and if it comes to me you can treasure it up as a warning to your next pupil, Mrs. Fenton," she replied, sharply. "But at present I will enjoy myself to the utmost, if I can, and so I must persist in the dreadful impropriety of going to call on Mr. and Miss St. John."

And she left the room with a proud carriage that would well become her future rank and dignities.

Mrs. Fenton gazed after her with a strange, furtive smile.

"Let her be—give her rope enough," she said, "and we shall see the end. Proud damsel, the end is not yet, and you may live to repent this presumption."

But she only commented on the mien and carriage of her charge, without taking any farther measures to alter her determination, and some half-hour from that time the heiress was riding rapidly towards the dwelling of the St. Johns.

Yet she was not altogether content with the result of her late dialogue with Mrs. Fenton.

It had roused up memories and conjured up fears that she would fain have buried in oblivion for ever.

Who was she?

Whence had come her noble heritage?

What mystery could so have enveloped her whole history?

Such were the questions that presented themselves to her mind as she rode along.



Mrs. Fenton's warnings were of course idle. Her jealousy of authority explained the ominous tone she assumed; but still it was not in woman's, and certainly not in a young and impressionable nature to utterly disregard such prophecies.

Did she know aught?

And, worse still, did she predict truly?

Gwenda's lips quivered, and her hands clutched the rein of her horse with an involuntary suddenness that made him rear and stand on his haunches till Gwenda could scarcely hold on even by frantic clutches at his mane.

Surely something besides her unconscious cheek must have pulled up Saladin, and excited his ire. For, though habitually the most docile of steeds to his young mistress, on this occasion he was utterly unmanageable to her will.

His whole frame quivered with alarm or rage, his eyes were dilated, his ears thrown back, and his head tossed in pride and indignation worthy of a more reasoning animal than a horse, however sagacious and highly bred.

The next moment the creature's panic was in a measure explained.

A tall figure suddenly appeared from behind a clump of trees by the side of the road, and stood almost fronting Gwenda. His hand was laid on the bridle, and he stood by the creature's head, his lips bent down close to the trembling ears, that seemed agitated like an aspen by the close approach. But, if agitated, Saladin was not apparently alarmed. He discontinued his prancing and rearing rebellion, and he only stood calm and quiet before the stern grasp and look of the stranger.

Gwenda was actually bewildered. She felt as if she would rather have encountered the danger of managing her refractory steed than seen that tall figure and thin face at her saddle head.

"Your horse is unruly—he is scarcely safe for one like you to ride," observed the stranger, as he held the bridle and restrained the curvetting of the excited animal.

"Thank you—he is not at all vicious. I believe it was my own fault," said the girl, with a mingling of pride and timidity that gave her a rare charm at the moment.

"How? I should scarcely have believed you could irritate him," asked the stranger, with a smile.

"Yes. I drew the rein too sharply. I remember now," she said. "I am obliged—much obliged," she added.

And as her eyes fell on the poor raiment and the thin cheeks of the stranger her hand was hastily extended in search of her purse.

"I cannot thank you sufficiently," she said, more kindly; "but if you will accept this—"

She drew a sovereign from her purse as she spoke and extended it to him half-hidden in her small fingers.

He looked keenly at it.

"Do you value your life at that?" he asked, rather scornfully.

"Is it not enough? You shall have more if you will. Is this sufficient?" she added, drawing a bank-note from the well-lined purse.

But the stranger pushed it indignantly away.

"If life can be bought for money," he said, "it were priceless for such as your purse contains. To me it is differently estimated. I consider it can but be repaid by itself—a life for a life."

"I do not understand you," she said, timidly.

She glanced round for her groom as she spoke.

There was something so singular and startling in the man's whole manner that she felt at the moment she would have emptied her purse willingly to have been fairly rid of him.

"Do you not? Then you are more obtuse than I should have believed," he answered, calmly. "If I mistake not, you have both the education and a mind that ought to be able to understand so simple an assertion."

"Yes—in some degree," she replied, hurriedly. "I know that life is very precious—at least to most—but what can I do to repay you, except by money?"

And again her eyes rested involuntarily on his poor wayworn garments.

He gave another scornful smile as he saw the look.

"Yes—I look as if in need of some such help in your eyes, young lady, I can imagine," he went on, bitterly. "To an heiress such a dress as mine must seem the very incarnation of deep and loathsome misery."

"Then you know me?" she exclaimed. "I thought you were a stranger here."

"So I am; but it is very easy to recognize a beautiful and richly gifted young lady," he went on, with a cold smile; "they are not so numerous as to be confused together."

Again Gwenda felt bewildered and even alarmed. Common gratitude dictated kindness and forbearance

with the stranger's remarkable whims. But still she had an intense desire to escape from his vicinity.

"If you will name your own reward," she said, kindly, "and it is in my power to grant, I will gladly give it to you; but please do not detain me longer, for I shall be expected at home, and have not performed my errand."

"Oh, my boon is a very simple one," he said; "I only ask to be admitted to your presence when I may come to Fern Place, and not be turned away as a vagrant."

Gwenda hesitated. It was perhaps the most unwelcome request he could have made. She would far rather have emptied her purse in his hand than have the terror of his advent hanging over her head.

"It would be ungracious to refuse," she said, after a short pause; "but still I cannot see what good it can do you. If you want anything or have anything to say why not tell me now?"

"If I want—if I have anything to say," he repeated, slowly. "Well, perhaps it may be so, and perhaps I could if I chose say it now. But I do not choose, and it may be I never shall; it all depends on circumstances that I cannot foresee. But I wish to provide against them while I have the chance."

His eyes were fastened on her face as he spoke with an intenceness that might have belonged almost to a lover, had his age and station permitted such an idea. But still the tone had something mocking in it. And Gwenda's pride rose at the unaccountable interruption alike on her time and her liberty of action by a stranger.

"I must go," she said, hastily. "Excuse my seeming discourtesy; but really it is rather your own fault than mine. I have done all I can to express the gratitude I most truly feel. Farewell, sir, and thank you from my very heart," she added, putting a slight touch to her horse's bridle-rein; that at once sent him off at a brisk canter.

"Proud and impatient, spoiled by prosperity and adulat on," he murmured, as he turned away. "And yet perhaps it was my fault rather than hers. I must not be hard on one so pure and so unconscious of the truth. Alas, alas, the revelation would indeed be bitter, perhaps unbearable, to her spirit!"

And he lounged slowly away, wrapped in deep and unpleasant thoughts, to guess from the expression of his care-worn visage and lingering footsteps.

Meanwhile Gwenda, centered on at a pace that perhaps corresponded with the fever of her feelings. She had been thoroughly annoyed and troubled that ill-fated day.

The remarks of Mrs. Fenton were so singularly corroborated by the inscrutable smile of the man who had established so annoying a claim by his service.

And the heiress had been of late so little accustomed to such ruffling of her composure that it was little wonder if it upset her whole equilibrium and little fitted her for the visit she was about to make. But her word must be redeemed, this time especially, as she had so determinedly expressed her will to Mrs. Fenton.

So, impatiently swallowing the angry sob that rose to her throat, she gave one dash back to the resentful tears which had gathered in her eyes, and galloped on till she reached the St. John's modest residence.

They were at home, and Gwenda was quickly ushered into the apartment that might be called the music-room, rather than any other appellation.

The father was, as so often happened, entirely occupied with his musical lore. The score of a lately published opera was before him, and he was busily engaged in trying it over on the instrument which he could best command—a violin. But, on seeing their fair visitor, he hastily pushed it aside and cordially welcomed her with an impressive eagerness that was more remarkable in his absorbed dilettante self.

"Ah, fair Gwenda, a thousand and one welcomes," he said, pressing her hand in both his. "You are just come in time to help me in interpreting this splendid composition. Isabel, there, does not give her soul enough to the divine art to thoroughly comprehend and do it justice."

Gwenda gave a half-timid look at the young lady thus underrated as to musical ability, but Miss St. John only raised her eyebrows with a half-amused, half-pitying glance at the instruments in question, and Gwenda took courage to comply with the amateur's request.

Mr. St. John was right. The composition was a singularly well-considered and beautiful production.

Gwenda was soon persuaded to take off her hat and gloves, and sit down to the piano, where in a few minutes she was herself as engrossed as even her host could desire.

Her rich voice thrilled through the apartment, giving a full and sublime effect to the melodies in question, and Mr. St. John was in raptures at the quick perception and brilliant execution she displayed in the sweet music.

"Ah," he said, with a deep sigh, when she had finished; "what a pity it is that you should be a young lady of fortune, instead of being compelled to earn your living. You might win a European reputation if you chose by that voice and your thorough musical taste," he added, as he saw Gwenda's perplexed and somewhat amused look.

"I am afraid you would change your opinion if it were put to the test," she answered, with a smile. "I do not feel that I have either the capability or the courage to encounter the fatigues or exposure of such an ordeal."

"And I should imagine you would be very sorry to change for it if you had," laughed Miss St. John, gaily. "Really, papa dear, you are getting such a fanatic per la musica, that I am afraid some day of having a prima donna for a stepmother, with nothing but a voice to recommend her to my filial affection."

Her father shook his violin-bow good-naturedly at her.

"You are tolerably safe," he said. "I am too old for such a good fortune, unless I had rank and wealth to make up for my deficiencies in youth and good looks."

He turned to Gwenda as he spoke, as if for a responsive smile.

But her thoughts were wandering far away, and his words had excited strange speculations in her brain.

"Do you suppose it is a great honour then?" she said, suddenly recalling herself to the present moment. "Is it a great honour to win one of these wonderful musical geniuses, Mr. St. John?"

Isabel St. John remembered in after days the singular look of interest that the young heiress gave while awaiting her father's reply.

At the moment it only struck her as a proof of girlish caprice or a humouring of Mr. St. John's hobby by pursuing the subject.

"An honour!" repeated that gentleman, with a half-comic, half-serious expression of surprise. "I should rather think so, Miss Lorraine. Why, when there is at once artistic and musical talent—when there is youth and beauty combined with such gifts, as we so often have seen, a prima donna might command any match short of a prince of the blood. And if one may say so, without treason, even they are more restrained by law perhaps than any personal objection from the fascination thus exercised."

Gwenda laughed, but it was a thoughtful and rather constrained sound, with little of girlish mirth in it. And after a little more casual talk she rose to go.

"I shall be scolded, I expect, already," she said, "I have been a long time away. I was rather hindered in my ride hither," she added, her adventure of the afternoon returning to her mind.

"Indeed, and how did that happen?" asked Mr. St. John, who was paternally interested in all that concerned the fair young heiress.

"Oh, a mere accident. I let Saladin have his way too much, and he got rather unmanageable; but some stranger was near enough to seize his bridle, and calmed him down most mysteriously," she answered, carelessly.

"Indeed; not a horse-whisperer, I suppose?" laughed Isabel. "I have a great curiosity to see one of those wonderful people."

"Well, it was almost as magical," replied Gwenda. "He certainly had a strange power over Saladin, who trembled very guiltily, I can tell you, when the affair was over."

"My dear child, you had better not trust him again. Let me send you home in my little trap?" said Mr. St. John, anxiously. "The cob is at any rate quite safe if not so handsome and spirited as your Arab."

But Gwenda laughed gaily.

"My dear sir, what in the world would Mrs. Fenton say? I should be shut up for the next month, unless she went with me in a Noah's ark drawn by Flomish drayhorses," she said. "Oh, I shall be safe enough if I am careful, and, if not—"

"If not you would break half the hearts of half the county," said Mr. St. John, gallantly, "to say nothing of the one who will be in more permanent despair than those who would mourn the loss of the fairest rival of the neighbourhood."

Gwenda shook her head with a saucy defiance as she shook hands with her host, and, kissing Isabel, hurried away from the flattering admirer.

She sprang on to Saladin's back as gaily and as fearlessly as if no such warning had been given. But yet as she cantered gaily along the lanes and roads she thought of all that had taken place during that ominous afternoon.

The singular warnings and fancies of her chaperone, the equally remarkable adventure with that stranger, the gay badinage of Mr. St. John, all had rather influenced her by the combination than by their separate importance.

What would have been her fate, she thought, had not the mysterious influence of the unknown benefactor changed her whole destiny?—a half-educated, half-trained, portionless girl, dependent either on chance or the reappearance of the guardian who had taken her to the school which had so long been her home.

Gwenda's proud heart swelled within her at the remembrance of those early days.

It was impossible, she thought, utterly impossible that she had sprung from plebeian or from a disgraceful stock. Every instinct forbade the idea. Her consciousness of refined beauty and patrician tastes and instincts acted against the probabilities of such degradation.

"If it were so," she murmured as Saladin fell into a gentle walk, in the cheery lane which led to Fern Place, "I should never have been the heiress I am. No vulgar rich upstart would have taken such a mode of displaying his bounty and his wealth. No, no, dear, noble Bernard, you will have no unworthy plebeian for your bride, even if my birth is not equal to your own. And I have at least a dowry to bring which might benefit a peer's daughter: yes, even Maud can scarcely vie with that. And then there is no love there, none; he abuses from the union, and she, of course, is coldly indifferent in her turn. Well, if we are to be brides together, if our fates begin at the same point, if we are to be sisters in relationship and in destiny, we shall have little in common in our lives, so I predict."

The sudden ringing of a loud gong that she recognized as the summons for dressing at her own mansion, now close at hand, roused her from the reverie. She hastily pushed her horse to its speed, and in a few moments she was cantering up the ride to the front entrance of the house.

A carriage was just turning away from the door as she rode up. There had evidently been some arrival, not an ordinary caller, for the carriage was dusty and travel stained, and a portmanteau and hat-box were in the hall.

Her heart leaped wildly. Who could the sudden new-comer be?

Bernard was the first to rush to her mind; but that was of course too improbable. Lady Brunton would never have consented to such impropriety as for him to remain in her house, even under the sanction of Mrs. Fenton.

Then came wild fancies as to the possibility of the guardian of her childhood reappearing to assert some evil influence over her destiny.

Her voice actually shook as she asked the servant who appeared at the hall door the name of the new-comer, and the man looked askance at his young mistress to see what sudden alarm could have occurred that might have agitated her usually gay, careless mien.

She gave a sigh of involuntary relief when the reply was given.

"It is Mr. Bolton. He is in the drawing-room with Mrs. Fenton, if you wish to see him at once."

(To be continued.)

**THE LIABILITY OF HUSBANDS.**—The Bill promoted by Mr. S. Morley, to amend the Married Woman's Property Act, contains the following provisions:—So much of the Married Woman's Property Act, 1870, as enacts that a husband shall not be liable for the debts of his wife contracted before marriage is hereby repealed; but a husband shall not, after the passing of this Act, be liable for the debts of his wife contracted before marriage, except by reason of any marriage which shall take place after this Act has come into operation, and then only to the extent of any property to which he shall have become entitled in right of his wife by virtue of such marriage, or otherwise in right of, through, or under her. The Bill bears the names of Mr. Morley, Sir J. Lubbock, and Sir C. Mills.

**THE "LONG MAN" OF WILMINGTON.**—The figure of a man, 250 feet long, traced on the side of Wilmington hill, which attracts so much attention on the South coast line of railway leading to Hastings, has now had its outline completely restored. The figure is of great antiquity, but its date, origin, or purpose cannot be traced. Hitherto the outline has been marked by simply cutting the turf away and exposing the chalk beneath, but it is now shown by the insertion of white bricks in the space, thus preventing the lines from becoming obliterated. The "Long Man," as it is locally termed, is represented as holding a staff in each hand, the distance between them being 119 feet. The Duke of Devonshire, on whose ground the figure is delineated, has greatly assisted the work just completed.

**DON'T SLANDER YOUR NEIGHBOUR.**—No, don't! it's wicked. He may be innocent of the charge alleged against him; you may have condemned him from circumstantial evidence, and it is never safe to reach a decision upon such evidence. Be sure you are

right before you undertake to go ahead. Your neighbour may be poor, and have no friends; if so, by kind words and charitable deeds make yourself his friend. Instead of by harsh words and arbitrary display of the power with which wealth invests you crushing an already humble heart, and bringing misery on one upon whom it would have been just as easy and far more natural to have bestowed comfort and happiness. The one upon whom you would vent your malice may be a widow or an orphan—one deprived of her benefactor or guardian; then be thou a benefactor, and suffer not the breath of calumny to taint the fair fame of an unblemished character. If there remains one feeling of humanity in the bosom of the slanderer, how doubly keen must be his remorse when the amount of misery he has occasioned forces itself upon him. When slanderous reports reach you, whether you believe them or not, don't give them any greater publicity. It is bad enough to talk nonsense, but infinitely worse to talk slander. Don't do it.

#### RELIC OF BURNS.

SCOON and Perth Masonic Lodge, known as No. 3, the third oldest lodge in Scotland, has become possessed of a very interesting relic of Burns, which is understood to be hitherto unpublished. It is addressed to "Mrs. W. Riddell, Halesiths." The poem appears to have been written on three pages of a sheet of letter paper, the following note occupying the first page:

"Mrs. W. Riddell, Halesiths.—The health you wished me in your morning's card is, I think, down from me for ever. I have not been able to leave my bed to-day till about an hour ago. Those wickedly unlucky advertisements I lent (I did wrong) to a friend, and I am ill able to go in quest of him. The Muses have not quite forsaken me. The following detached stanzas I intend to interweave in some disastrous tale of a shepherd

"Despairing beside a clear stream":

"L'amour: toujours l'amour!"

Volte subito.

"The trout in yonder wimpling burn

That glides, a silver dart,

And safe beneath the shady thorn

Defies the angler's art:

My life was once that careless stream,

That wanton trout was I:

But love wot! unrelenting beam

Has scorched my fountains dry.

"That little flow'ret's peaceful lot

In yonder cliff that grows,

Which, save the linnet's flight, I wot,

No ruder visit knows,

Was mine, till love had o'er me passed,

And blighted a' my bloom;

And now beneath the withering blast

My youth and joy consume.

"The waken'd lark's warbling springs,

And climbs the early sky,

Winnowing by the dewy wings

In morning's rosy eye:

As little reek I sorrow's power,

Until the flow'ry snare

O' witching love, in luckless hour,

Made me the thrall o' care."

#### THE CURIOUS WAYS OF PLANTS.

Who can account for the ways of plants, or explain why a certain species will grow in one place, and will not in another exactly similar, so far as human intelligence can determine?

The American aloe is a hundred years in getting ready to flower, whereas the gourd grows like Jack's beanstalk. Some wild flowers disappear on the advance of civilization; while, on the other hand, the plantain, if the truth is told, goes wherever Europeans go; and in America was unknown until after the English came, following so closely on their tracks that the Indians gave it the name of "white man's foot."

Some varieties, as above intimated, may be found in a particular locality, and nowhere else within half a dozen miles. There is, for example, in central New England, one spot where are a few shrubs of the mountain laurel ("spoonwood") in a little patch by the roadside; and it can be discovered in no other place anywhere about.

Then there is the fringed gentian, which has been seen beside a secluded road in a certain locality in America; but, with that exception, appears wholly unknown in the vicinity; yet the closed gentian is abundant. Another of the perversely disappointing flowers is the dog-tooth violet; not, however, more capricious than the yellow violet and the noble liverwort (*hepatica triloba*), which, in certain dry maple woods, in the one case, and in open knoll-covered

pastures, in the other, grows in great abundance; still, one might search acres of similar woods and pastures for them all to no purpose.

Another case, somewhat in point, is the holly—indigenous, or at least one variety, to moist woods along the eastern border of New England; but so partaking of the aforementioned eccentricity that he may count himself a happy man who can find it, and prove his success by great armfuls of it wherewith to deck his house at Christmas. One gets glimpses of it while riding through some swampy track on Cape Ann; the bright berries and evergreen leaves, so suggestive of English good cheer, betraying it. There, too, in summer, by searching diligently, one may find a species of magnolia, that being about its northern limit.

No common New England flower is so little to be depended upon as the trailing arbutus. It is difficult to determine what it wants. It abounds in gravelly knolls by the wayside, and thrives on the very edge of pasture bogs, and in the shade of woods; and yet, with all this versatility, there are many towns where it is never found, and where, through transplantation and tended with care, it cannot be made to live.

Quite opposite, in these respects, is the "cardinal flower," whose home is by the water side, the only place where it grows naturally, although the kind of water is not of imminent consequence, for it will do just as well in a dark nook under the upheaved root of a willow, on the edge of a mill-pond, in the mud-diast ooze, as in the cleanest sand along a river's bank, its chief requirement seeming to be that it shall not be crowded, one stalk always standing by itself, independent of its kind, and not in close neighbourhood to other plants. It is so adaptive that it will bear removal to a garden, taking kindly to its new conditions; and there it will come up, year after year, flaming out in live scarlet, in "one glorious blood red," as if nothing had happened to it.

There are other facts more singular as to the ways of growth and "how" of blooming. One can understand that a grape vine may hold to its support by means of a tendril, while an ivy or a Virginian creeper secures itself by thrusting its rootlets into a crevice of a wall or in the bark of a tree; but why should a honeysuckle and a bean vine wind in opposite directions, the one going to the left and the other to the right? and either will swing on the wind or sprawl over the ground rather than turn the other way.

The ketmia opens at nine o'clock in the morning, and shuts at ten, as if it had a visual weakness; while a bed of portulacacae never expands unless the sun is out; and the hotter he shines the wider they spread themselves; and the evening primrose waits until he has gone down, and then comes open with a snap, like a subdued kind of fire-cracker.

But most unaccountable of all, perhaps, is the night-blooming jasmine. You see a simple tree-like plant, with a plain style of leaf, at the base of which grows a spray of yellowish green tubes, like lilac buds, suggesting, more than anything else, a string of small candles. You look at them in the middle of the day, and they are "only that and nothing more"; and you might, if you do not know their ways, forget all about them; but when evening comes, forgetting is impossible. The room is full of fragrance, rich as orange flowers, and almost as subtle as violets, and lo! your little candles are all lighted; and from somewhere about them comes that perfume which is so delicious and so mysterious as to its source. The next morning they begin to contract; by noon, the five points are all close packed, and there is no scent to them or about them at all till night comes on again; and so they continue, scentless through daylight, but of exquisite sweetness when darkness appears.

THE Rev. Henry Ward Beecher makes this reply to a query as to whether it is wicked to dance: "It is wicked when it is wicked, and not wicked when it is not wicked. In itself it has no more moral characters than walking, wrestling, or rowing. Bad company, untimely hours, evil dances may make the exercise evil; good company, wholesome hours and home influences may make it a very great benefit."

**ADVICE TO THE GIRLS.**—Girls talk and laugh about marriage as though it were a jubilee, a glad-some thing, a rose without a thorn. And so it is, if it is all right; if they go about it as rational beings, instead of merry-making children. It is a serious thing to marry. It is a life-business, and that of heart and happiness. Therefore never do it in haste; never run away to get married; never marry for wealth, or standing, or fine person, or manners, but only for character, for worth, for the qualities of the mind and heart which make an honourable man. Take time; think long and well before you accept any proposal. Learn all that is possible for you to learn of your proposed husband; when all doubts have been removed, and not till then, accept him.





[FATHER AND SON.]

## ADRIEN LEROY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Maurice Durant," "Fickle Fortune," etc., etc.

## CHAPTER IX.

Now neck to neck, with veined nostrils ope,  
The panting reoers swiftly cope;  
While shouts of warning, rage, and prayer  
From eager throats make thick the air,  
Till the full length of course is run,  
And swiftest feet the race have won.

The morning of the race shone bright, sharp and clear. The Leroy course glittered through the dew-drops like a thing of fatal beauty.

With the dawn streams of pedestrians had tramped through the quiet villages to the gathering-place. Later on strings of carriages beat up the dust of the hard roads.

In dribbles of two and three the late horses arrived, swaddled in clothes like dainty plants or fractious children. Bowlegged grooms and diminutive jockeys made the air reek with odours of the stable, and the ear painful with coarse oaths and vulgar, horsey slang.

Still later on came the mob of turfites and book-makers, all with that hungry, red-nosed look which distinguishes the professed layers of odds.

Then came an army of carpenters, who, with practised facility and rapidity literally ran up the grand stand, and covered it with its dainty crimson cloth and Leroy streamers.

Towards noon, the hour at which the chasers were to leave the starting-post, the crowd grew denser, the oaths thicker, and the shouts of "Two to one on King Cole," "Four to three on Rosierucian," "Six to one on the favourite against the field," were hoarse and turbulent.

Twelve o'clock struck from the castle stables clock, and still no appearance of the "swells," as the lower orders delight in denominating the higher.

"Your swells are always late," said a thick-lipped turfite, biting his stubby pencil prior to booking a favourable bet. "They plays to carry it high. It ain't their style to be punctual. That's left for such poor chaps as us. Two to one on King Cole! Hullo! what's that weedy animal goin' in for?"

The remark was echoed by several, as a dark chestnut, thin in the flank and badly groomed, made its appearance amongst the highbred occupants of the paddock.

A little, dirty-faced, closely-shaven Yorkshireman had her in charge, and he looked as nonchalant and self-satisfied as if he held the bridle of King Cole himself.

Presently, while the crowd push round the sacred enclosure, a light, soft footfall sounds on the turf, and Mr. Jasper Vermont, the first of the "swells," leaps over the railing.

Presumably he has come to cast a last glance at the favourite, but as he passes the Yorkshireman with the weedy chestnut he says, behind a sheltering cough:

"That will do. Take him off. The plant's safe without him."

Three minutes later a laugh of derision rose as the announcement is made that the rough-skinned chestnut is "scratched."

"Quite time too! Who's his owner?"

But nobody knows, and nobody cares, for at that moment a gay and handsome cavalcade dash up.

There are two carriages, one with the ladies and another with the grim baron, who detests a crowd even when it is patrician, and prefers seeing the race from his carriage to mounting the grand stand.

But the cynosure of all eyes is Adrien Leroy, the owner of the favourite.

Handsomer as ever, he looks this morning as indifferent as ever, and perhaps a trifle more weary.

The King turns his head with a whinny that is all but a supplication. Alas! his master does not understand the equine language, and the note of warning is lost upon him.

"Beautiful as a daisy," says Mr. Jasper, passing his hand admiringly over the satin neck.

"Too thin in the legs," murmurs the Yorkshireman.

Adrien turned leisurely.

"Too thin, you think, my man? I'll lay twenty to one upon them."

"Done, sir," said the man, sharply. "For pounds or hundreds?"

"Hundreds," said Adrien.

Mr. Jasper touched him on the arm, and whispered, gravely:

"Rather hasty! Plenty of money upon him now, don't you think?"

Adrien smiled rather haughtily.

"Hundreds it shall be," he said, and turned.

The Yorkshireman touches his hat to Mr. Jasper as to a perfect stranger, and the two gentlemen pass to the weighing-seat.

"Where is Peacock?" asked Adrien.

"Oh, inside, peeling," said Mr. Jasper, carelessly.

"He's all right; I have just been speaking to him."

Adrien passed on and approached the first carriage and leaned on its window-ledge to shake hands with the Marchioness of Calne and her sister, the latter a young lady with two special objects of regard—Lord

Byron and the gentleman now pressing her small palm.

"And so your horse, that pretty creature with the long neck, is going to win," said the marchioness.

"We hope so," replied Adrien.

"Oh, Lady Constance said it would win for certain," exclaimed Lady Alicia, blushing at her own temerity.

"Oh, nothing is certain save death and the Three per Cents," said Adrien, turning the grave regard of his dark eyes upon her. "Racehorses are fickle as ladies, Lady Alicia; both are utterly untrustworthy. But I think you may bet on the King; he's in fine form. Are you going to the stand?—Ah, here is Jasper!" as that gentleman sauntered up. "He's your beau cavalier, I suppose, Constance."

And as Jasper held his arm for the ladies, Adrien raised his hat and transferred his attentions to the baron, whose carriage was about to take up position.

The baron raised his hat in response to his son's uncovering.

"Well, sir, why are they not started? Have these racing fellows ceased to be punctual as well as honest?"

"There rings the bell, my lord," said Adrien. "Can you see here?"

"Yes!" replied the baron. "Is the horse fit?"

"Admirably," said Adrien. "It is a certain thing I think. I must go and take my place. The duke acts as umpire. There is likely to be a crush at the fence, sir; you will enjoy that."

The baron uttered something in reply half contemptuous of all things, earthly or heavenly, and Adrien made his way to the stand.

The marquis, Pomfrey, Ireton, and the rest of the castle guests had arranged the ladies, who were glittering like doves in their seal and beaver furs, and eagerly learning which horse was which and to whom it belonged.

Harsh cries from the betting-ring still ascended at intervals, though the majority of the crowd were still with anticipative excitement.

Adrien made his way to the seat reserved for him beside Lady Constance, and leisurely unstrapped his field-glass. Then he handed it to her ladyship.

"Can you see with this?"

She tried it.

"Beautifully. What an excitement they seem to be in!" she said, looking down upon the seething crowd.

He smiled. Beyond a hope that his well-beloved horse would get fresh laurels for itself the affair had no interest for him. To the fearful amount he had risked he never gave a thought.

And now, amidst a sharp cry of excitement, they were off, Rosierucian leading, Bluebell running close on to her, the King striding leisurely along, and a little compact posse pushing on its flanks.

"There goes the King!" exclaimed Lady Alicia. "Oh, I do hope it will win, don't you, Mr. Vermont?"

Mr. Jasper smiled. "I do indeed," he said, and his little steely eyes rested upon the shrivelled figure of Peacock, the jockey, with keen scrutiny.

Meanwhile away they went, Rosierucian still leading, Bluebell falling away, and the King creeping up easily to the second place.

The first hurdle was hopped over feathery, the next, a tough place of obstinate thorns, threw Bluebell back. The King cleared it in his stride and threw a speck of white foam on the haunches of the Rosierucian, still leading.

Adrien nodded approvingly. "That fellow knows how to ride," he said. "If he keeps the King like that the race is ours."

"Oh, yes," said Jasper, "he understands him. You will see how nicely he keeps him cool till the spurt comes."

"Which will beat the last hurdle," said the marquis.

"Exactly," said Jasper, pleasantly.

Hedge after hedge was cleared and still the Rosierucian was leading; but it was evident to all that the high blood of the King was burning to get away, and that his jockey was playing a waiting game.

Bluebell struggled on to the stream, but there, unencouraged by the way in which the two leaders had cleared it, she refused and deposited her jockey for a cooler.

A laugh rose in the midst of the excitement, but it was speedily drowned by frantic shouts of: "Now she has it!" "He's let him go!" "The King wins!" "No, the Rosierucian!" "No, the King!" "The King's got away!"

And so he had, for Peacock had deemed it expedient to put the sport on already, and the noble King, with a toss of his trained nostrils, had darted ahead. Then they raced across the level flat, cheered and shrieked at by the frantic crowd.

The aristocrats on the grand stand felt their blood rise. Ladies raised themselves on their hands and peered forward.

Like lightning the two noble creatures neared the last obstacle, a great hulking, grim-faced hedge, like a mountain.

Neck and neck they seemed to go at it, as if they meant to swallow it.

But suddenly the King darted forward, and amidst a terrific roar of astonishment took the leap too short, fell sideways, and pitched his jockey like a bolster a dozen feet away.

Rosierucian rose for the leap, cleared it, and seeing nothing behind, cantered in.

A dense roar of surprise, dismay, rage, astonishment, and a mingling of satisfaction, and the crowd, breaking all bounds, pressed forward to the spot to which the starter and officials were already hastening.

A murmur of astonishment and disappointment ran through the grand stand, and all eyes were turned to Adrien. But he seemed the least concerned of all, as, shutting his field-glass, he said:

"Rosierucian ran finely! I can't understand the King hurrying that last hurdle. Jasper, let us go and see if the fellow is hurt."

With Mr. Jasper at his heels he strode down the stand, and hurried across the course.

The course hushed its chatter, and made way for the owner of the loser to pass through it.

In its centre two men—the duke and the starter—were kneeling over the little heap of leather and silk. The duke looked up as Adrien approached, and shook his head.

Adrien bent over the shrivelled face feelingly. "Has a doctor been sent for?" he asked.

"Yes," said the duke, gravely. "But I think he will be too late—his spine—"

At that moment the heavy eyelids raised themselves and the blood-stained lips trembled.

"He is speaking," said the duke.

The starter knelt down.

"Where is he?" asked the jockey, "where is he? I want to see him."

"Whom?" asked the duke, "whom do you want to see, my good fellow?"

"Perhaps it's me," said Mr. Jasper, coming forward with kindly sympathy. "I know him. Perhaps he wants to explain—"

At the sound of his soft voice the jockey raised his head and glared at him, then his glance fell upon Adrien, and, with a sudden light upon his face, he stretched out his hand.

"Him! him! the swell! I want to tell him—the race—the horse—sold! Him—villain!—the horse!" Gasping out these disjointed words, he glared first

at Jasper, then at Adrien, struggling to convey some warning or explanation, but in vain.

With the last words he fell back.

"He has fainted!" exclaimed the duke.

"Allow me," said a gentleman—the doctor—pushing forward, and dropping on his knee.

"Fainted? No, I am sorry to say, he's dead."

"Dead! fear me!" said Mr. Jasper; and one might have fancied, but for the inhumanity and injustice of the idea, that there was a certain tone of satisfaction mingled with the extremely sympathetic ejaculation.

## CHAPTER X.

The homeless, the wretched and  
Are exposed to the dreary void,  
The homeless desert of the mind,  
The waste of feelings unemployed.

At night, when the great course is deserted and silent, when the noisy crowd has tramped back to London, and the wrecked form of the dead jockey lies covered over with the white sheet, in the stable-house, the silver drawing-room is full of light and beauty.

The guests have dined, the gentlemen have followed the ladies, and music played by dainty hands and strilled by fair throats is making digestion a luxury.

Lady Alicia, watching her new friend behind the wings of her sister, thinks him handsomer than ever, by lamplow candlelight, and whispers to the marchioness.

There is a little gravity upon his white forehead. "He is thinking of the poor jockey," suggests the girl.

The marchioness smiles.

"But he is. He is always gentle and compassionate, though men say otherwise," replies the marchioness.

But if he be, he is the only one there so humane. On Mr. Jasper's horse, now, plays a wretched smile, and with the next time will be by sympathy to allow of unpleasant reflections on a dead steppeder.

"One thing is certain," said the marquis to Lady Constance, who had been sighing over the defeat. "He will not allow any one to ride the King again but himself. I heard him say so."

Lady Constance smiled, and sighed:

"Mr. Adrien has lost heavily?"

"Immensely, I should think. More than he knows, but certainly less than he cares. He thinks nothing of the stakes so that he has the excitement. They are the mere makeweights, the necessary formula for the proper conduct of the game. Oh, yes, he must have lost heavily. Here is Mr. Vermont, he could tell us, I daresay."

Mr. Jasper Vermont smiled and shook his head.

"I am afraid to say how much," he said. "But Adrien has himself to thank. You have heard, I suppose? He gave the fellow a ten-pound-note last night, with which, like such creatures, he got deplorably intoxicated. Consequences: an unsteady hand this morning, a hasty push at the last rise, and a clear loss of the race, not to mention the fabulous sum in bets. All Adrien's own fault! If he will be so recklessly generous, what is to be done?"

The marquis raised his eyebrows.

"Just like Adrien," he said, and moved off to repeat Mr. Jasper's story, which of course accounted for everything, and lent an extra interest to the event of the day.

Oh, yes, it was his own fault, no doubt. If he had kept the ten pounds in his pocket the jockey would not have drunk himself incapable, and the race would have been the King's.

To both causes and results the principal participant in the latter seemed as unconscious as the dead jockey himself. On his easy lounge he reclined, listening and talking with the old reposeful smile, as if the race were a thing of a decade ago.

To-night he would not sing, there were too many to applaud; but he rose twice to conduct Lady Constance to the instrument, and stayed by her side during the song to turn the leaves of her music.

The lookers-on, the ladies in especial, whispered behind their fans that the match was settled, and sighed with envy of the beautiful Constance's bias in perspective.

But towards midnight the monarch of fashion seemed to have forgotten even his beautiful kinswoman, and when the fair faces and bright laughter had vanished from the room, and the men had sauntered up to the grand divan for a before-the-bed cigar and some Badminton, the weary look had settled like a cloud on his lips, and he lay with closed eyes, wrapped in the incense of his narghille, like a sultan asleep.

The duke reclined near him. The remainder were disposed in every imaginable attitude on the broad velvet lounges, Mr. Jasper among them, smoking an

enormous regalia, and provoking a laugh with some delicate but sharp-pointed wit.

"Asleep, Adrien?" asked the duke, laying his strong hand upon his bosom friend's shoulder.

"No," said Adrien; "wide awake and musing."

"What are you thinking of? Counting up the losses?" asked the duke, with a short laugh.

Adrien smiled.

"No, I leave that for Jasper, who is the multiplication table with legs. I'm sorry you fellows were let in. I cannot understand it; but yet I suppose I should. My fault, says Jasper, and I bow to his decision; and yet I saw the man as he galloped past, and I saw no sign of anything wrong on his face."

"Nor I," put in Mr. Jasper. "I was in the weight-lift and saw him scaled. All right then. He was always white and seedy-looking. I saw nothing wrong."

"Nor I," echoed the others.

Adrien puffed out a fresh cloud of perfumed smoke.

"The losses are heavy, I imagine, and yet I would rather they were doubled, ay, trebled, than that the poor fellow should lose his life from a horse of mine."

There was a quiet gravity in the deep-toned voice that spoke of a regret for which the light hearts around him would scarcely have given him credit.

"His own fault; it was suicide! He put the King to it too soon by half a minute," said the marquis, angrily. "The horse was not to blame; he would have taken the hedge and another one on top of it but for that unlucky spurt."

"I believe it," said Adrien, rising. "No one shall ride the King for the future but myself. Jasper, send him for the Cap. We will give him a chance to retrieve this day's failure."

Mr. Jasper rose, and the two, amidst a volley of good-nights, passed into the corridor.

As Adrien turned to ascend his private staircase he said, quietly:

"Jasper, can I trouble you for yet another favour? That poor fellow—let him have a Christian burial in the chapel yonder; and if there are any relations find them out and—There, you know better what I would do and how to do it. Don't wait!"

Mr. Jasper returned the kindly salutation and trod softly down to his own apartments.

"Christian burial!" he chuckled, smoothly. "Oh, yes, he shall have Christian burial in the family vault! Lucky for me the hound died when he did, or matters would have been awkward. Ah, well, it is the risks and chances of the little game that make it so enchanting. A grand coup to-day! Let me see," and smiling at his smooth face in the glass he closed one eye and touched the fingers of the right hand with his left. "Five—ten with Yorkshire Twining's last little touch—ten thousand pounds! Ah, if these gay jays knew how the 'intruder,' the 'interloper' as they call Mr. Jasper Vermont behind his back, was deftly stripping them of their golden feathers, how they would wince. Ten thousand! But Twining was too risky. My grand knight might have smelt a rat. It was like him, 'twenty to one,' because some stranger doubts the strength of his horse's legs! Oh, he has a mighty regal way with him, my fine prince, a mighty way with him, that 'tis well he can afford to pay for. Ten thousand pounds! Go on, Jasper, the game grows exciting; you hold the winning cards. Gentlemen, make your game; the ball is rolling."

With this invitation to mankind in general, and his noble and wealthy acquaintances in particular, Mr. Jasper commenced to disrobe.

He kept no valet. Men of his character do not fancy one pair of eyes so constantly upon them. "The man who takes off your coat and parts your hair sees farther into your heart than any one else," says a modern Rabelais, and Mr. Jasper Vermont agreed with him.

"I am a simple-minded, rough-and-ready creature," he often assured his friends, "and a man to tie my cravat and worry me into wearing an uncomfortable hat because he happened to want the comfortable one for himself would drive me mad."

So he undressed himself slowly, reckoning up his little gains, smiling at his mask of a face in the large mirror, and hatching his little plots with every knot he untied, every button he released, and at last got into bed and slept as softly and comfortably as an open-hearted farmer's wife.

Not so Adrien, his friend and benefactor.

Dismissing Norgate, after he had removed the close-fitting evening-coat and replaced it with a dark-purple velvet dressing-robe, the hair of Barmister threw open the windows of his dressing-room and stepped out on to the terrace.

It was a bright night and the stars were glittering like the diamonds on the satin of an empress's bosom.

The wealthy, much-envied Adrien leaned against the marble balustrade and looked out upon the night with a sigh.



Before him stretched in seemingly endless vista the woods and meads of his inheritance. At his side outstretched wings of the gray old castle, above him rang out the holed step of the watchman on the battlements, before, behind, around him on all sides immense wealth and power, and yet—

Well, he sighed, and mused thus: "Grand old woods, sighing there with a thousand voices, what does the wind say to you, or what are you telling the wind? Are you mourning for the departed days and dead-and-gone masters? Days of glory and men of might. Are you bewailing the degenerate race that now own you and pining for some greater hearts and manlier hands? Degenerate indeed. Who, looking at the grim old lord, surly and sullen as a bear, would think him of the stock of whom kings learnt courtesy? And who—still worse—looking at me, the pampered Sybarite of a degenerate age, would guess that my ancestors made these same woods ring to the tune of their war shouts and the clashing rhythm of their arms? Oh, degenerate days indeed! Hollow mockery of nobility and glory, when the greatest feat is his who devises a new cravat or invents a fresh entrée!"

"I am very weary of it all. I am like the skeleton at the emperor's feast. 'Man delights me not nor woman neither.' Ah, there's the rub. Others find sweet consolation in the 'grande passion.' Soft lips console them for past and faded glories, sweet kisses lull their shame and manly remorse to slumber. Love, that marvellous panacea for man's heartache, soothes the galled vanity and jaded agony of other men, but flies from me as sleep fled from the blood-stained Richard. And wherefore? Fair women have smiled on me since my cradle days. Soft lips in plenty were ready, nay, eager to lull me to content. Many a score of dainty voices have raised their charm, to find it powerless.

"And wherefore am I incapable of love? Is this heart of marble; am I fated to pass through this weary round of days to the end without feeling the warmth of that great tender mystery? Where shall I find a sweeter, lovelier face than my fair cousin's yonder? A light burns in her casement, she is still awake. Is it vanity or but the plain truth, to remind myself that she is thinking of me, and thirsting for my love?

"Can I not see it in every turn of her head, in every glance of her dark, quiet eyes? Then, why cannot I give her love for love, take the first offering she would pour upon the altar and mingle to the gods my sacrifice with hers? Why? why? Because my heart tells me that Constance's face, beautiful as it is, is not enshrined in the inner sanctuary of my soul. I know, as if it were clearly writ on yonder bright planet that I do not love her, that I do not love one of the many fair forms that lay in my path, and that until the divine flame springs hot and passionate in my breast I shall be cold and weary still. Oh, love, well may the poets who rave of thee call thee divine and mighty, if without thee life is but a tasteless draught and pleasure the dead-sea apples of dust and ashes!"

His hand fell on the broad marble slab as he uttered the last words wearily, and at the sound of his voice, or startled by his light step on the mosaics, a casement farther down the facade was flung open and the figure of the baron stepped out upon the terrace.

Adrien was in no humour to meet his father, was too weary and disaffected with himself and all else to confront the old man's satire and ill-nature with his usual respectful calm, so he turned into the shadow of a buttress and waited.

The baron's quick eyes saw him however, and striding forward he laid his hand on his shoulder.

"Well, sir?" he said. "Can't you sleep, or is this the new mode—to spend the small hours star-gazing?"

"I might retort in kind, my lord," replied Adrien, coming forward with a smile.

"I am old, sir, and have thoughts more wakeful than yours should be. I am old, and you are young."

"Say sad as well, sir, and wearily tired, and that is worse, I think, than age."

"You have not tried the latter," retorted the baron, grimly, fixing his eagle eyes upon his grand, reposeful face. "You have not tried the latter, sir. And so you find it sad; the moods of present times are new and strange to me. At your age I was—well, if not happy, at least merry. You seem, sir, when away from other eyes, as if you had taken care upon your shoulders and could not be rid of him. Perhaps you are thinking of the fortune that unlucky horse lost you this morning; or perhaps regretting that your friend had not broken his own neck instead of his miserable tool's."

"My lord!" exclaimed Adrien, quietly but amazedly. "Of whom do you speak?"

"Of whom should I speak that base-born cur who insulted me under my own roof-tree—that base-born friend of yours, Jasper Vermont? Are you blind, sir?"

are you deaf? Did you not see—were there none true enough to you to point out the significant glances that passed between the dying man and his tempter? Did you not hear the villain's accusation of the demon who had killed him? Deaf and blind as the man who harboured the viper, if you hear not its rattle and see not the venom in his eyes. I tell you, vain boy, that Jasper Vermont bribed that miserable jockey to rope your horse, and that you have been swindled out of the thousands this last amusement cost you!"

Adrien's eyes blazed. "My lord," he said, and his voice though low was as hard and metallic as steel, "you wrong yourself in tempting me thus to wrong another. Jasper Vermont is in league with a jockey! He is as incapable of such villany as I should have thought you, my lord, of such an accusation. But, forgive me, you have some proofs, doubtless; give them to me, my lord, and if they are unanswerable I promise you to punish as severely as you yourself could wish."

The baron's brows knitted. "Proofs?" he repeated, sternly, but with a troubled twist of the lip. "Do such villains work so clumsily as to leave proofs? No, I have no proofs but the common instincts of humanity. Your friend is a rogue; it is writ on his smiling, plebeian face, and it needed only the scene of this morning to confirm my suspicions. Believe me, sir—"

"My lord, forgive me," said Adrien, drawing himself up to his full height and looking marvellously like the anster, stern face he fronted. "Forgive me, you have forgotten in the expression of your dislike that the man you speak of is indeed my friend. I should be unworthy of myself if I stood meekly quiescent under such an accusation against him, for such a vile charge falls on us who clasp his hand. We share its indignity and it becomes us to hurl it back upon the traducer. Prove to me that he is the scoundrel you would have me believe him and I will render you such due satisfaction in his punishment that you shall be the first to cry 'enough.' Otherwise, if you cannot give me anything more tangible than the bare accusation, you but bind me closer to him by the wrong you do him. 'Proofs, my lord, or—'"

"What?" said the baron, and his face grew pale and twitched. "Nay, do not reply. I have no proofs. You have conquered; but, sir, mark me, you have conquered against your own good. From this time hence go your own way, hand-in-hand with that man. Let these eyes see what they may, these lips shall utter no farther warning. Go, sir, to the doom which awaits all those who place their trust in faithless curs. As for me I will wait, and I prophesy that before the grave shuts out all things from these eyes they will rest on the agony of your betrayal."

"Enough of the viper. Now to fresh follies. Adrien, you are a man. I am nearing the tomb yonder in the old church. Barnimster looks to his heir, and would have not a wasmiller, empty of heart and weary of religion, but a man such as his fathers have been before him—a man with man's duties and man's cares, but with man's stake. Adrien, at your age your mother was at my side, ruling with me beneath this flag; at your age I had given the house its pledge of a son and heir; at your age I was wedded and had left the lighter loves of the world for a more lasting and responsible one."

"Strange stories reach me—wafted here by malicious tongues, no doubt—of your life yonder. You live the pace, they tell me, and call you monarch of the fashionable world. Barnimster Castle, the house of refuge to the martyred Charles, looks for something higher as its lord and master than a rover, amongst the sours of the earth. I tell you, sir, at your age I was wedded."

"And loved?" said Adrien, softly.

"Ay, loved," exclaimed the old man. "Your mother, sir, had that something which is higher even than beauty, though in these days they tell me you have made it the supreme deity. Your mother, sir, was that which ranks above rubies, a good and virtuous woman, worthy of a Leroy's love."

Adrien turned his pale, calm face suddenly and raised his hand from the marble.

"'Worthy of a Leroy's love!'" he repeated. "Find me such a woman, good, virtuous, capable of firing the dead passion in my heart, and I will wed her, my lord; until then—"

"Find her for yourself, sir; and, if you need a guiding finger, I would point where others long since have marked—to Constance Tremaine."

Adrien's face darkened and he turned with a sigh. "She loves you, sir," said the old man, "and you would turn aside! Pearls are thrown in gutters nowadays to the men who neither know them for their worth nor stoop to pick them up. She loves you, sir."

"And I—"

He stopped short and paced up and down, his eyes fixed on the mosaics.

"Will learn to love her in return?" said the old man.

"Will!" said Adrien. "To command love is beyond human power. I cannot say 'I will,' my lord; but if your heart is set upon it shall I say 'I may'?"

The baron caught his hand, then dropped it suddenly as if ashamed of the momentary emotion.

"Well said," he exclaimed. "Act upon it but half as firmly and I shall see the clouds lifting from your brow. Give up the weary round of tasteless pleasure, fling the cup aside, make Constance your wife, and give the house a son to rule after you. Then—well, praise comes ill from my lips, but at least you shall hear no words worse than 'well done!'"

As he spoke he let his hand fall to his side, and, drawing his velvet robe round him, strode to his window.

Adrien paused in his pacing and looked after him. "Love Constance!" he murmured; "would that I could say 'I will,' but at best I can but say 'I may.'"

He turned as he spoke and with thoughtful brow passed into his own apartment.

A moment after the casement above him opened and a woman's face looked out.

It was marvellously beautiful but deadly pale. The dark eyes swept the terrace with a flashing glance, then rested upon the spot where Adrien Leroy had last stood.

The firmly-pressed but deliciously-formed lips opened slightly with a sigh, then a crimson flush flooded the fair face and there wafted out into the still night air:

"Must be the task, Adrien Leroy, to change that 'I may' to 'I must!' 'May' love me! I swear he shall!"

(To be continued.)

DR. PERCY has been appointed by the First Commissioner of Works to examine and report upon the state of Sir Edwin Landseer's lions in Trafalgar Square. Recent examination has shown that the lions have in many places been injuriously affected by the peculiar chemical action of the weather.

THE SLEEP OF CHILDREN.—Parents should not allow their children to be waked up in the morning. Let nature wake them; she will not do it prematurely. Take care that they go to bed at an early hour—let it be earlier and earlier, until it is found that they wake up themselves in full time to dress for breakfast.

TRUE TEACHING.—Our sons are taught how to make money, and our daughters how to attract attention; but little if anything is done toward imparting to them that instruction which would enable them to preserve and maintain unexceptionable health, without which the admiration of courts is a bare endurance, and the glitter of costliest gems as valueless as the dust of the street.

ANTIQUITY OF EMBROIDERY.—Some historians declare that Phrygians first discovered the art of embroidery. From the Bible we learn that the high priest's robe was adorned with figures of pomegranates wrought in colours of blue, scarlet, and gold. Virgil says: "A noble present to my son she brought, A robe with flowers on golden tissue wrought." In the Odyssey we read: "Close by the stream a royal dress they lay, A vest and robe with rich embroidery." Beckmann says: "Threads of the dearest and most malleable metal have been used for adorning various garments. During Moses's time embroidery appears to have been performed by men."

MAJOR-GENERAL WOLSELEY'S SERVICES.—Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, G.B., K.C.M.G., now counts 22 years' service, having entered the army in March, 1852. He served with the 80th Regiment in the Burmese war of 1852, and was severely wounded at the capture of a robber chief's stronghold. Mentioned in despatches. Medal and clasp. Landed in the Crimea with the 20th Light Infantry in 1854, and was employed in trenches as acting-engineer until the fall of Sebastopol. Engaged in assaulting and defending of the Quarries, and in the attack of the 18th of June; severely wounded in a subsequent sortie. Several times mentioned in despatches, medal and clasp, Legion of Honour, 5th class of Medjidie and Turkish medal. Served in Indian campaign, including relief, siege, and capture of Lucknow, defence of Alumbagh, and various minor actions. Repeatedly mentioned in despatches. Brevet and Lieutenant-colonel, medal and clasp. Served on the staff during the Chinese war of 1860, and was present at the assault of Taku Forts, and in all other engagements. Medal and two clasps. Commanded the Red River expedition in 1870. Created a knight of St. Michael and St. George, for his services on that occasion. Altogether Sir Garnet Wolseley has served through five campaigns, and has received five medals and four clasps. He is also a Knight Commander of St. Michael and St. George, a Companion of the Bath, a Knight of the Legion of

Honour, and possesses the 5th class of the Turkish Order of the Medjidie. His promotion was very rapid. Entering the army on the 12th of March, 1852, he became lieutenant in May, 1853, captain in January, 1855, major in March, 1858, lieutenant-colonel in April, 1859, and colonel in June, 1865. This last is his real rank at present, that of major-general being temporary during his command of the Ashantee expedition. It does not appear to be generally known that Sir Garnet Wolseley has but one eye, having lost the other when a lieutenant in the Crimea, while leading a forlorn hope against Sebastopol. Both he and Sir Archibald Alison, the chief of his staff, were not only in the very hardest of the work in the Russian campaign, but both were severely injured, Sir Archibald losing his arm in one of the fray.

### SCIENCE.

A NEW flying machine is announced in the United States. Steam is the motive power, and by it four sets of wings are moved. The machine is described as something like a turret tower to a monitor, carrying above it a mast of a vessel, with spars attached and swinging around it, with a balloon-basket suspended underneath.

A REDDISH-BROWN PAINT FOR WOOD.—The wood is first washed with a solution of 1lb. cupric sulphate in one gallon of water, and then with 4lb. potassium ferrocyanide dissolved in one gallon of water. The resulting brown cupric ferrocyanide withstands the weather, and is not attacked by insects. It may be covered, if desired, with a coat of linseed oil varnish.

THEORIES OF VENTILATION.—A correspondent says: "The reason we have so many false theories about ventilation is this: We have heard or read that carbonic acid is heavier than the pure air, and consequently must sink to the bottom, and should be discharged at the floor; but we forget that carbonic acid coming from our lungs has a much higher temperature than the surrounding atmosphere, consequently it rises. Make the discharge, therefore, in the ceiling or the chimney, and you are rid of it."

NEW COAL FIELD.—The sinking for coal in Sandwell Park promises to be crowned with success. At the depth of 378 yards the "brooch" coal of South Staffordshire has been reached, and the corresponding iron-stone beds pierced. The ten-yard coal is known to be about forty yards below the "brooch" coal; and, as the sinking progresses at the rate of about five yards per week, the problem will soon be solved. If this coal is found, it will be a great scientific triumph, and all-important as proving the extension of the South Staffordshire coal field eastward.

THE QUEEN'S YACHT.—The Royal paddle-yacht "Osborne" recently left Portsmouth to complete, by her runs under full and half-boiler power over the measured mile, her official trials which she had commenced at Spithead. The results were highly satisfactory. Next to the Queen's yacht, the "Victoria and Albert" (taking the measured mile speeds of the latter when at her best, as the "Osborne" is now at her best), the "Osborne" is the fastest vessel under full power and over short distances standing on the "Navy List"; but she can never, with her limited tonnage and want of boiler power, be expected to take the first place for speed.

OIL PAINTS.—Mr. J. Argall, mining engineer, of Adderbury, proposes to give body or opacity to the paint by using as a basis the natural mineral carbonate of baryta and zinc, or native zinc ore, to which carbonate of baryta is afterwards added. The zinc ore or the baryta and zinc mineral is subjected to a roasting process. The required colour or shade of colour is given to the paint by the addition of calcined ores of lead, tin, zinc, copper, iron, or manganese to the compound or mixture. By the use of baryta a peculiar glossy surface is given to the paint, and the said baryta also effects such rapid drying of the paint that the use of ordinary dryers is rendered unnecessary.

A HILL OF SULPHUR.—One of the most remarkable deposits of native sulphur as yet discovered is a great hill composed of the almost pure article found some two years ago at a distance of thirty miles south of the Union Pacific Railway and nine hundred miles west of Omaha. This marvellous deposit is found to consist almost wholly of sulphur, containing only 15 per cent. of impurities. The best deposits heretofore available are those found in Sicily. The principal supplies for the manufacture of sulphuric acid come from there; the deposits contain 35 per cent. of impurities and 65 per cent. of sulphur. The recently discovered sulphur hill, therefore, is much the most valuable, and promises to become ere long of great importance.

RESPIRATION WHEN ASCENDING MOUNTAINS.—According to careful experiments made by M. Lortet, in the valley of Chamounix, up to a height of about

13,000 feet the respiration is but little troubled, if the precautions are taken of walking with the head low, to diminish the orifices of the air passages, of keeping the mouth shut and breathing through the nose, and of sucking some small substance, as a nut or stone, to increase the salivary secretion. Above this height the respiration becomes hurried, even to 36 a minute, and difficult, the feeling being as if the pectoral muscles had become rigid and the ribs were encased; the amount of air which passes through is much less than in the valley, and the amount of oxygen for the purification of the blood is very small. The pulse, says Lortet, passes from 64 to 100, according to altitude, and is febrile and weak, the arteries feeling almost empty; the rapid circulation of the blood in the lungs adds to the insufficient oxygenation, arising from the rarefaction of the air, the veins become swollen, and there is invariably experienced a heaviness in the head and sleepiness, due to imperfect aëration of the blood.

THE TORPEDO.—During the discussion on Mr. Barnaby's paper, at the recent meeting of the Institution of Naval Architects, Admiral Lord Lauderdale remarked that, since the torpedo system had been so much improved we need not be afraid of our harbours, for the torpedo would take care of them. The Americans, with that aptitude for mechanical invention for which they are distinguished, have developed both torpedo attack and defence to a very high pitch; yet Admiral Porter, the very able head of the American fleet, in his annual report to the Secretary of War, lately published, asserts that no towing, diving, or swimming torpedo yet invented is a match for a smart vessel properly armed with her crew at her guns. The Harvey and fish torpedoes can only, he adds, be used successfully against ships taken by surprise, or lying at anchor. Still, both authorities we have quoted may be right, for the American admiral evidently contemplates an engagement on the high seas, and the other probably the defence of a harbour against a bombarding squadron. Yet there even might, in the confusion and smoke of a sea-fight, be ample opportunity for launching these formidable missiles against a vessel hotly engaged. It is satisfactory, at all events, to know that the subject is engaging the close attention of our own naval department; so that, when the occasion arrives, we shall not be found unprepared.

### ESSENTIAL OILS.

ESSENTIAL oils are volatile, and may be distilled without decomposition; they are the product of flowers, plants, fruits, or the juices of certain odoriferous woods. Essential oils differ from the fixed oils obtained from fatty substances; for while the latter are compounds of glycerine and fatty acids, the former are generally hydrocarbons, but sometimes contain also oxygen and sulphur. The fixed oils combine with alkalies to form soaps, but the essential oils do not. All essential oils have powerful odours, and many of them have a hot, aromatic taste. The odour is sometimes agreeable, and at other times repulsive. The most fragrant are oil of rose, jasmine, tuberose, orange flowers, heliotrope, violet, bergamot, and lavender. Paper is rendered permanently transparent by an application of fixed oils; but only temporarily so by the use of volatile preparations. Essential oils are soluble in alcohol and ether; but only partially so when immersed in water. Many of them are found ready formed in plants, and give the peculiar odour to the leaves, flowers and fruits which make the acquaintance of our oil factories.

The volatile oils are, in many instances, isomeric, that is, composed of the same elements and the same proportions, but with different properties. Chemical science, however, has not yet been able to convert the one into the other, most probably on account of the different groupings of the same number of elements.

Oil of lemon and oil of orange peel are obtained by placing the rinds in a linen cloth and subjecting them to a powerful pressure between iron plates. The vessel in which the pressure is applied should have a discharge pipe at the bottom. The oils thus obtained are impure, but extraneous matter is separated by careful filtration. Orange flowers, or neroli, has the same chemical composition as the above, but is possessed of more fragrance. In obtaining the last named, more care is necessary, and the petals are subjected to distillation with the vapour of water. Oil of orange flowers, when fresh from the still, is almost colourless; but by age and exposure it soon acquires a red colour. It is easily rendered soluble in alcohol, and is extensively used in the manufacture of cologne water.

Oil of rose is the most expensive as well as the most fragrant of all the essential oils. There are two varieties of this article, one of which is obtained from the East Indies, and is the product of the *rosa moschata*; the other comes from the Levant, and is obtained from *rosa sempervirens*. In the east, the

petals of the rose and other flowers are collected, immersed in spring water, and afterwards exposed to the direct rays of the sun. In the course of a few days yellow drops of oil collect on top, and are taken up by a bunch of cotton tied to the end of a stick. When sufficient is gathered in this way, the oil is pressed out of the cotton. In some sections the whole flower is subjected to distillation, the calyx remaining entire as it is plucked from the stem. In Egypt the petals of flowers, and especially roses, are subjected to distillation with water in copper stills. Some manufacturers of essential oils place alternate layers of rose leaves and sesame seeds in a vessel, where they are allowed to remain about a fortnight, when fresh layers of roses are added, and this operation is repeated several times, or until the seeds have absorbed sufficient oil, when they are subjected to pressure, the rose oil collecting on top, and the oil of the sesame seeds separating and settling to the bottom. Oil of rose is a thick yellow liquid, which solidifies at a low temperature, and becomes a viscid mass. When concentrated its odour is so strong as to cause headache, and it is only when diluted that its fragrance can be best appreciated. Its sweetness is not injured by the action of sulphuric acid.

There are said to be over one hundred varieties of essential oils, very similar in chemical properties, but differing greatly in taste and smell. The oil is hidden away in little cells which require to be broken before the flower exudes its real fragrance. Violet, heliotrope, and several other delicate perfumes are subjected to infusion and absorption in melted tallow or lard, and in this manner their oil is secured.

Jasmine, tuberose, and other flowers that are injured by heat are subjected to absorption alone. This process is extensively used in several parts of France, and is termed enfleurage. Oil of camphor is obtained from the wood or gum by distillation with water; it is subsequently purified by repeated sublimation. The wood, however, is the most generally used for this purpose. It is insoluble in water, but easily soluble in alcohol, ether, and the fixed oils. Oil of turpentine is obtained by distilling the crude juice alone or in water, and is made pure by repeated rectification with water. It is a colourless liquid with a strong aromatic but disagreeable odour. It is of great value in the arts, and for medical purposes. Oil of juniper has a different composition, but is obtained from fresh berries after being pounded thoroughly and macerated several hours in water. The subsequent process of distillation is much the same as in respect to turpentine.

CASE OF ALLEGED SECOND-SIGHT.—A singular case is reported from the neighbourhood of Marlborough. A labourer named Duck, employed by Mr. Dixon, of Mildenhall Warren Farm, was in charge of a horse and watercart on the farm, when the animal took fright and knocked him down. The wheel went over his chest, and the injuries he received were such that his death occurred shortly afterwards. However, the singular part of the story remains to be told. Duck resided at Rainsbury, and immediately after the accident Mr. Dixon despatched a woman to acquaint his wife with the fact. On arriving at her home the messenger found her out gathering wood, but shortly after a girl, who was her companion, without being told of what had occurred, volunteered the statement that "Ris (Mrs. Duck) was unable to do much that morning as she had been very much frightened, having seen her husband in the wood. Shortly afterwards Mrs. Duck returned without any wood, and being informed by a neighbour that a woman from Mildenhall Woodlands wished to see her, ejaculated immediately, "My David's dead, then." Inquiry has since been made by Mr. Dixon of the woman, and she positively asserts that she saw her husband in the wood, and said, "Hallo, David, what wind blows you here, then?" and that he made no reply. Mr. Dixon inquired what time this occurred, and she replied about ten o'clock—the time at which the fatal accident took place.

MARRIAGE OF THE DAUGHTER OF THE VICEROY OF EGYPT.—The journal "La Turquie" publishes an account of the marriage festivities on the occasion of the marriage of the Princess Zineb Hanoum with Ibrahim Pasha. The Princess remained in a private room with the Princess-mother and aunt of the Khedive until after dinner, when she received her lady guests in another apartment, where were displayed the costly marriage presents sent by the Sultan. The room was profusely and richly decorated, a carpet of the rarest furs covered the floor, and the walls and ceiling were hung with fabrics of inestimable value. Elevated in the middle of the room were three thrones covered with fine silk tissue with gold embroidery. On one of these the Princess, resplendent with jewels, took a seat, her mother and grand-nunt seating themselves the one on her right hand and the other on the left. To them now advanced their



highnesses the maternal grandmother of the Princess, the mother of Prince Ibrahim Pasha, and the wives of the Khedive; as they entered the room they opened bags, from which, in conformity with an ancient custom, they took handfuls of gold, which they flung on the heads of the festive assemblage. On the day following the wedding the bride was conducted with great pomp to the palace of her distinguished husband. In the van of the marriage cortège capered the prefect of police on an Arab charger, richly caparisoned. The prefect was accompanied by a brilliant entourage of officers. Following these marched detachments of cavalry and foot soldiers. Then came the ulemas and imams chanting invocations for the happiness of the princely couple. The equipages of the ladies belonging to the household of the Khedive and of Prince Ibrahim brought up the rear, followed and flanked by a couple of canvases. The carriage which contained the Princess Zeineb was drawn by six horses.

## THE BLENKARNE INHERITANCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Miss Arlingcourt's Will," "The Ebony Casket,"  
"The Secret of Schwarzenburg," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER XV.

ALGERON'S Bombay letter came to Allahabad immediately after the news of the safety of the shipwrecked passengers.

Aimée's lynx eyes were on the watch, and her adroit management secured the letter, for none of the servants at Allahabad could read writing. There was really a letter for her from Amri, sent down by the confidential agent to whom she had instructed Amri to direct them, and dextrously slipping the two together, Aimée went off with them, leaving the rest of the unimportant mail matter to be carried up to the general's room.

She read Amri's letter first, devouring every word with all the unreasoning fondness of a mother's love. It told her little beyond her shrewd surmising. He had escaped alone from the island, been taken on board a Suez steamer, and was hastening on to England, the belt and the papers safe in his possession. Already he showed signs of his inheritance of that subtle cunning of which Aimée had always been so proud. He was taking lessons in English manners from a young gentleman on board with him, and assured her he had already conquered the Hindoo servility, and could be as audacious and boastful as the best of them. He warned her to keep him closely informed of the general's movements; above all, to guard against his receiving any letters from the true son, and to tell him how he must write.

Aimée smiled triumphantly as she read.  
"No fear of the general's interference," she muttered. "The game is all in our hands."

But she frowned and knit her brows savagely when she broke open Algeron's letter, and read there of his suspicions in regard to his loss.

"Amri was weak and foolish," she sneered. "He should have made sure that this fellow would not again appear upon the scene. Nevertheless, let him fume, and even dare us, if it comes to that. The general is dead. The papers and proofs are all ours, and this usurper here is in my power beside. Ah, ha! we are safe—quite safe. And the belt, the wonderful belt, is ours! Fortune indeed smiles upon us."

And then she carefully destroyed every shred of both letters, and sat down and wrote herself to the direction Algeron had given in his letter:

"General Vansittart is dead. He told you that you were not his son. He gave you all he had to bestow upon you when he parted with you. This is written at his last request. AIMÉE."

She sat a long time over the letter, evidently not quite satisfied with it; and presently seizing upon the pen again, she re-wrote it, adding another sentence, intimating that if he would wait patiently, he should presently receive full accounts, as, by wish of the governor-general, the general's death was kept from the public for purely military reasons.

This she sealed and directed, and sent by safe hands to Calcutta. Her own plan of action was hardly definite, but waiting for the pseudo general's next move. Her gleeful satisfaction was scarcely decently restrained when she knew that a cheque from the general's bank-book had been signed, presented and honoured. Now, at last, there was an explanation of Adam's unwarrantable proceedings, which the stupid law could seize upon, even if the darker accusation fell for want of proof.

At this juncture, the crafty Aimée felt the need of a confidant, and looking around her carefully, her choice fell upon a early, vindictive-spirited Scotchman, who had formerly been in the

general's employ, but who had quarrelled with Adam, and consequently been promptly dismissed. Well aware of his cherished animosity, Aimée knew she could trust John Bimblecome to hunt down the prey. After much deliberation, she decided to make a partial confidant of the man, and set him to a close watch at Meerzapor. Accordingly, she found a pretext for bringing Bimblecome to Allahabad, and as readily contrived a private interview. She took care to dress herself as grandly as possible, and to assume the lofty air which is so impressive upon men of his class, and almost her first words were:

"Art thou a man to remember or to forget injuries, John Bimblecome? I have waited long to ask that question of thee."

The Scotchman stared at her, and mumbled out an inarticulate reply.

"I mean, has it faded from your mind how you were driven out of this household? And would it please you to do a kindly favour—to set up in a new and prosperous position your successor, this Adam, who used you so kindly?" she continued, smiling triumphantly as she saw the sullen red flash into his cheek, and the angry light kindle in his eyes.

"I should like to see him hanged," snarled Bimblecome.

Aimée laughed in that low, peculiar way of hers, and, bending forward, laid her hand lightly upon his arm.

"If you choose you may see the wish come true. Look you, Bimblecome, can you be wary and discreet, and above all shut firm lips upon a babbling tongue?"

He looked eagerly into the dark, gleaming eyes that seemed to dive down into his very soul.

"It is to work his downfall?" he asked quickly.

"Yes, to ruin him for ever, and to give him to the punishment he deserves. I thought I could trust to your help," she answered, calmly.

"How? Only show me how," demanded he, fierce to assume the task.

"Come here. Look out yonder," spoke Aimée, quietly, to make out her revelation the more startling and impressive. "Do you see out yonder in the hammock?"

Bimblecome followed her pointing finger, and stared with a puzzled look.

"Why, that is General Vansittart—not his valet."

"It is not General Vansittart. I tell you, man, it is not our master. He has disappeared, and that villain yonder, assuming the general's identity, is Adam, your friend Adam," she declared, in a fierce, low whisper.

Bimblecome looked as he suspected she had lost her senses.

"I tell you I can prove it to you. He is skilfully disguised and strangely like him, but I swear to you it is Adam and not the general," she went on.

Bimblecome was still incredulous.

"Idiot," cried Aimée, stamping her foot, "should I send for you to impose upon you a tale I cannot prove? Do you remember the scar on Adam's hand—the scar my teeth left there? Go, look for yourself; it is on the man's wrist yonder. Do you see now why General Vansittart has so mysteriously retired, refusing to receive visits even from the officers of the garrison? It is easy to impose upon these stupid Allahabad servants, but he does not trust himself to sharper eyes. I tell you it is Adam who is assuming General Vansittart's name and rights."

"But where then is the general?" questioned Bimblecome, convinced in spite of his doubts by her manner.

"That is the question which puzzled and perplexed me," replied Aimée, "but I have solved it at last. The general has been murdered!"

"Heaven save us!" ejaculated the Scotsman.

"But bring Adam to justice," sneered Aimée. "I believe the Christian asks that as much as the Hindoo."

"Why don't you denounce him at once? He will be hanged sure enough if Adam is the murderer. Let me go up to Calcutta with the accusation," cried Bimblecome, eagerly.

"And ruin everything," she answered. "Your English laws do not always punish justly. How much are you and I able to prove against this Adam? and what will accusations avail without proof? If you are to help in this matter you must promise to be guided by me. I have laid the plans and kept close watch, holding my own counsel. You must do the same. You need not fret, the end will come soon enough. I wait for only one link more."

She then related the circumstances of the general's departure from Calcutta, described where she had hidden the blood-stained napkins, and what she had patiently and secretly ferreted out at Meerzapor.

By this time Bimblecome recognised her superiority and ability, and when she authoritatively

assigned to him the part he was to play he accepted it without a word of opposition.

Aimée smiled contentedly as she watched his departure.

"I may trust the Scotchman to hunt down the prey, though I myself should take a hasty departure," she muttered. "If only he will finish the story, and solve the question that still puzzles me. I will dally no longer. He has grown slow and laggard at his writing. I think he was scarcely an hour at the desk to-day. I cannot imagine yet what he really is, this Adam. I must wait and know before I leave for England, that I may be sure how to circumvent him should he interfere. If he would only write differently, and not use the strange names, I could tell better, but so far I cannot judge which of the characters in this story he writes of himself is. I thought he was strangely moved by his own words to-day. I saw his hand tremble and his lip quiver. Who knows but what I shall read to-night that which explains all?"

And with this hope the wily woman crept again from her hammock when all the rest of the household were fast asleep that night, and made her noiseless entrance into the little room held sacred as the general's private study. The keys stolen from the Calcutta library gave her ready access to all. She hurried to the desk, opened its lid with eager hands, and seized upon the book which held such vital interest for her. The freshly-written page, with its blotted and shaky penmanship, proved that her surmising had not been without foundation. The writer had been deeply agitated. Aimée's eye flashed again. She was sure it would explain all that had troubled her.

In her great eagerness to read she had neglected her usual precaution. She did not slip the bolt in the door which opened into the master's sleeping-room, but, sinking down upon her knees, with her arms spread out upon the desk, she began to devour the pages with swift and flaming glances. It was the first time her vehemence had set aside caution. Had she gone to the door she would have seen that it was left ajar, as she had never yet found it. She would have suspected that even the subdued glow of her taper might lead thither and give alarm if there were wakeful eyes within the sleeping-room. But she was overmastered by the intense eagerness of her curiosity, and for once, forgetting the wily cunning of her nature, she laid herself open to detection.

The light of the taper fell upon her, revealing a picture an artist might long to transfer to canvas. The kneeling figure, the supple, shapely arms crossed upon the desk; the loose, falling, glistening black hair, the dark, handsome face, full of that intense expression of fixed attention, the gleaming white teeth revealed between the parted line of vivid crimson, made up of a singular and startling vision.

So thought the gazer, who stepped cautiously from the other room, and half smiled, not yet realizing the object of her midnight intrusion. But when his eye fell upon the book spread open before her he gave a swift start, and his face grew dark and stern.

All her wanted Hindoo cunning seemed to have deserted her, and Aimée knew nothing of the menacing detection. She read on—on, scarcely drawing a breath, until the end was reached, when she drew one long, deep sigh, and, lifting her eyes, saw what confronted her. She gave one wild leap to her feet, turned about as if to flee, and then, conquering the trepidation, she faced about slowly, with a defiant smile.

"Well?"

"Well indeed!" retorted the gentleman, indignantly. "Your effrontery goes beyond my expectation, even after this specimen of your daring. What were you doing here? How dare you look in my face?"

"I was trying to find the explanation of a strange story, sahib, a very strange story. I am waiting for the end most impatiently," answered Aimée, with a mocking courtesy.

"Do you mean you have read every word in that book, traitress?"

"Every word, sahib," was the composed reply, and her black eyes flashed back wickedly his flaming wrath.

"It shall cost you dear, you heathen Jezabel," hissed he, fiercely. "You shall be well punished."

Aimée shrugged her shoulders.

"Punished by whom, sahib? By your hand yonder—the hand with the scar?"

And she laughed long and scoffingly.

He turned a shade paler, and gnawed a moment fiercely at his lip, while he muttered:

"So, has she learned another secret? The wily creature is capable of disarranging my plans. She is dangerous, and must be cared for."

And then he was silent a few moments, lost in deep thought, while Aimée stood like a defiant conqueror rather than a detected culprit. She knew

very well that he had little comprehension, even now, of the extent of her power over him. She kept her own copy of the written history hidden in the loose folds of her dress. He had no suspicion of Aimée's daring move. She was almost sorry that she had revealed to him her knowledge of his true identity, but she had no fears for herself or her position, and stood facing him defiantly.

Suddenly he stepped back, and called the man's name who was still sleeping at his outer door. It required a third repetition to bring him, and then he made his appearance, rubbing his eyes and staring stupidly around him. His face brightened into astonishment, however, at his master's first command: "Unloose her arms, Doby."

Aimée's black eyes snapped. She swept one hand fiercely to her belt, feeling for the dagger usually kept there, and stood at bay, like the fierce wild animal she really was.

"Lay a finger on me, and you shall rue it, Doby," hissed she. "I have nails and teeth; they have done good service before, and that is why he dares not touch me himself, but calls upon you."

"The sahib master speaks. Doby must obey," returned Doby. "How dares Aimée resist his will, who is her lord and master?"

She laughed contemptuously; and then suddenly made a dash at her own hand, and bit it fiercely till the blood came. Shaking away the scarlet drops, she turned to the master with a sneer.

"There! which of your slaves will dare lay a finger on me now? The superstitious idiots would rather die than obey your command, for the blood would defile them; they would lose caste for ever. You must do it yourself, if you dare."

The taunt seemed to sting him. He leaped forward fiercely, seized her shoulders, and twisting the supple frame around, bent down her head, pinioned the struggling hands, and paused, panting, but triumphant.

"Bring me the handcuffs, Doby—the handcuffs from my closet," commanded he, sternly.

Aimée was raging in impotent wrath, but the next instant the handcuffs locked her wrists together.

"Base, vile usurper!" began she, but he deftly knotted a sash around her head, securing the jaws so that speech could only be forced and painful.

"I can find a gag, if it is necessary," he said, grimly.

She took the hint, and was silent, but her eye glared at him in furious and vindictive wrath. This was a bolder move than she had counted on, and she raised inwardly at her own foolishness and carelessness, and when she was thrust into a small room near by, and the door locked upon her, she gnashed her teeth in unavailing repentance. Presently, however, she grew calmer, and took new heart.

"I must no longer dally here," she soliloquized. "I must hasten away, and he must be brought speedily to justice. There shall be no more faltering. Surely my wife have not so far deserted me that I cannot escape from this. He does not mean I shall die, surely? They will come to feed me. I will pretend to be subdued. It is his own dagger, blood-enriched, they will find with the blood-stained clothing in Calcutta—Adam's own dagger, and the wound I made in the breast of the corpse fits the dagger. What better proof can they have? Then this strange secrecy, this taking General Vansittant's name and money. Oh, ho! I shall live to gloat over the falling of this villain into his own trap. Only let me get out of his clutches this time, and there shall be no more delay. Why, even this will help me. I can testify that he bound me, put me in the locked room because I accused him of having usurped his master's place. Oh, no! the tables shall be turned shortly."

And with this exulting conviction the strange creature settled herself upon the floor as comfortably as her bound wrists allowed, and fell sound asleep, from which she was only roused at midday when Doby came with a plate of food.

She put on a meek and penitent face, and pretended not to be aware of the master's stern face behind the Hindoo.

"Doby, good Doby," implored she, "I am sorry and ashamed, but I suppose it will do no good to say so. I have an errand that I want done, and then I will bear this punishment patiently. The Scotchman at Meerzapor was to do some work for me, and I am afraid the lazy fellow will neglect it, and good and innocent folks will suffer by it. Will you only send some one to tell him that I am suffering this imprisonment and punishment, and say that he is to hurry with his work without waiting for any more direction from me? Tell him to have the box sent to at once."

Doby glanced back for his master's guidance. The latter stepped forward.

"Is it true, Aimée, that you are really ashamed of your lawless proceeding last night?" demanded he.

She hung her head low, and nodded acquiescence. "And you promise to remain here quietly, if Doby takes that message for you?"

"Yes, I promise. I will not say a single murmuring word if only the message is delivered. I promised the box should be ready, you know, and I would not fail of my word, even though it is that of a poor Hindoo ayah," was the humble answer.

"Unloose her hands, Doby, that she may eat," commanded the master.

And he stood by while she partook of her frugal rice and fruit, and then submissively held out her hands again for the handcuffs.

The latter act reassured him. He had been on the watch for some swift movement, some cunning attempt at escape; but when she allowed her wrists to be pinioned again, and sank down submissively, he believed the worst was over, and her humility sincere.

"Take the message for her, Doby," said he, carelessly, and gave it no more thought.

Two days afterward a small company of soldiers from the garrison rode into the courtyard, accompanied by an officer and some civil functionary.

The master of the house looked out with a frowning brow, and sent down word that General Vansittant was engaged in private duties, and could see no one.

"Tell him that we must see him," returned the intruders, sternly; "that we can take no excuses."

This message brought forth the redoubt. He came slowly forth, assuming a frigid aspect of haughty sternness, but turned deadly pale when a heavy hand was laid upon his shoulder.

"Adam Warner, in the name of Her Majesty we arrest you now and here!"

"Arrest me! In Heaven's name, for what? Look, you fellow, the governor-general will punish you for this insolence," he cried, indignantly. "You arrest me for what?"

"For the murder of General Ralph Vansittant," was the stern reply. "The proofs are full and complete. Your guilty fraud is exposed—your wicked race run."

Adam stood a moment like a man confused and dizzy with some heavy blow, then, raising his pale face, said, calmly:

"I will accompany you wherever you will, but this is only an idle farce. Send for Sir Richard Atcherley, he can explain all."

"Sir Richard will also be arrested as your accomplice," returned the officer, gravely. "The dagger, the blood-stained clothing, this miserable cheat of assuming the noble general's name, the hidden body at Meerzapor—everything is exposed. Miserable man, there is no chance for you to escape the punishment of your guilt."

"Who has brought forward this preposterous accusation?" questioned Adam, after a moment's painful thought.

The officer waved his hand to the rear, where looked forth the mocking, triumphant face of the Scotchman, who came forward and said:

"I am going to release the poor woman locked in one of the rooms there. I have obeyed her message, and done the work she set me. Congratulate me, General Adam."

Adam ground out a malediction. Aimée had outwitted him after all. He read the whole, and he saw also for the first time the deadly significance of the circumstantial evidence which hedged him about. He tried his best to maintain his dignity.

"Very well, I will go. But I ask you to go up into my private room and seal up and carry to a place of safety all the papers in the private desk there. They will be of use at the trial, and must not be lost."

"Let it be done," commanded the officer.

And during the time this proceeding occupied, the Scotchman found Aimée and released her.

It was her scornful voice that called out after him as Adam was taken away in the midst of the guarding soldiers:

"It is your turn, sahib; it is your turn now."

#### CHAPTER XVI.

A DAY or two after the introduction into their midst of the assumed son of General Vansittant, Aubrey Roscoe, carrying a little package of books under his arm, took his way toward one of the costliest mansions of the town, and was promptly admitted at the grandly carved door, as if well known and looked for.

A page, fancifully dressed in blue and silver, started up from the velvet sofa of an anteroom, and exclaimed, with a look of relief:

"Mr. Roscoe has come—let us be thankful! Now Miss Christabel will be good-humoured and gay. Nothing I have done thus far has pleased her, but she will pet me the rest of the day, I'll warrant."

And, with a saucy, knowing smile, which it was well his high-spirited young mistress did not behold, Ariel—as he had been renamed by his romantic patroness—skipped forward before Aubrey to announce his arrival. It was like the telling of an Eastern story, threading the way to the lovely little mistress of this elegant mansion. Now they crossed a grand, dark, picture-hung gallery, then they followed a marble-pillared corridor, and a broad hall, giving glimpses through open archways of richly furnished parlour and drawing-room; then they emerged into what seemed a crystal rotunda, a very fairy bower of loveliness and perfumes, all of diamond-paned glass, and filled with plants of costly exotics and creeping, blossoming vines, amidst which birds sang and a fountain flung its spray. A light bamboo sofa was set out before the fountain, just out of reach of its silver mist, and a tray of fruit was near it, but the place was empty. Aubrey looked around and smiled softly, and the tender glow wrought a wonderful transformation in the pale, handsome face, which otherwise had a marble, statue-like repose and gravity that was stern and chilling.

Ariel tripped on from the little Eden, and drew away the silken curtains from the arched entrance to a circular room fitted up in Pompeian quaintness and richness, with marble columns surrounding the whole room, at whose bases were vases of graceful design and costly material from which clambered vines that, twining around the columns in luxurious growth, yet gained the ceiling above, and blended in a fitting framework for the gorgeous frescoes there. Between the columns the blue and silver damask curtains fell in heavy folds, looped only at the large double window, and at the entrance way, from which the conservatory blossomed like a brilliant picture.

A little creature darted forward at the sound of their steps. One could hardly say it was a fairy princess or a humming-bird her appearance and motion suggested—she had such bright eyes, such a tropic fervour of expression in the charming face, and such swift grace of movement, and was so very, very small.

She had evidently selected her dress in reference to the room. A long loose robe of blue velvet trailed behind her, a mantle of fine white lace was knotted across her shoulder. Her shining dark hair was loosened from its braids, and only restrained by a string of pearls. Costly mosaic ornaments, set heavily in Roman gold, swung at her ears, plumed the lace mantle, and circled the snowy throat and tiny, pearl-hued arm.

She stretched forth the morsel of a hand and pointed to a volume thrown down recklessly upon the marble floor, while she said, in a fine, silvery voice, rich in tone as the trill of a wild bird:

"Ah, monsieur, my teacher, you have caught me in a pet. See where I throw the book! But it is you who are naughty. You are half an hour late. And I have waited and waited, and waited!"

And she looked up into his face with a pout on the red lip that was as charming and touching as the grooved curve of a baby's downy mouth, while those bright, dark eyes shone and sparkled, running over with the joy they did not care to hide.

"Ah, no, Miss Christabel," answered Aubrey, smilingly, "not so much as that. Half an hour! nay, scarcely five minutes' delay."

"It seemed as much, which is quite as bad. And you are always preaching punctuality to me. Isn't he, Puff? Where are you, Puff? Come and tell him how he has scolded me for not having my lesson ready."

And dancing back to the pile of velvet cushions filling the divan she caught up a tiny canine specimen, fit to attend her own little ladyship, it was so small and light, looking a ball of down or a puff of white snow, except for the little bead-like eyes and the blue ribbon collar.

"And how is Puff to-day?" asked the grave Aubrey, with as much solicitude as he had often shown for the welfare of human kind.

The little creature licked the hand that stroked his silvery name. Like his mistress he recognized the new-comer with evident pleasure.

"Sit up and tell him, Puff," commanded Christabel, gleefully; "make him a nice bow for good day."

And she put him upon the cushion, and held up her white finger commandingly.

Whereupon the little round ball of white made itself into a skin of floss, sitting upright with folded fore-paws, and gravely bowed its head twice, while the little black eyes snapped, evidently duly cognizant of the next move. For Miss Christabel, after catching him in her arms for a good hug, stretched out her hand to a bonbon tray on the table, and dropped a sweet morsel into Puff's longing mouth.

Then after a few little pats and caresses she put him down again among the cushions, and with a



charming little assumption of gravity and business declared:

"There, now we must have no more play. Go to sleep, Puff. And I must give you a lesson, or the great, grave master will be frowning upon us."

Aubrey picked up the book and smoothed out the crumpled leaves.

She hung over the book a moment, and looked out at him, half smiling, half in defiance.

"I couldn't help it. I was so vexed and impatient. You refused to do the last lesson. Why did you write that you could not come? That you didn't believe you could give me any more lessons? You don't like me. You weary of my stupidity; it was cruel in you to say so."

Aubrey's face flushed over with the sudden emotion that thrilled beneath her words, but he managed to control himself, and to hold back the wild avowal that struggled for utterance, and only said, calmly:

"You did not find any such statement as that in any note, Miss Christabel. It was very wrong in you to construe any such meaning."

"But I did find something that made me very unhappy. I am afraid I was very naughty and cross to poor Ariel and Madame Brent, and wilful with dear papa. Something in the letter said that you did not mean to come any more; and I was grieved—I cried myself—ill."

Aubrey's eyes, fixed yearningly upon the graceful, drooping head, told the story the quivering lips dared not speak.

Christabel looked up suddenly, and was again pettish and wilful.

"You do not care. You are not in the least sorry. You still mean it, perhaps," she declared.

"I don't know," stammered Aubrey, sorely tried by his effort at self-control.

"Come here, Puff! we won't trouble ourselves any more with the tiresome old lessons that made our head ache. We'll be gay and play ball and make garlands and eat bonbons, and think no more of being wise and good—now, will we? For he doesn't care about us—our master doesn't care!" cried Christabel, dancing to the sofa, and catching up her pet and standing with him in her arms hugged close, she proceeded, vehemently: "It is cruel and hard in him, and we both know it, don't we, Puff? But we'll try and not mind it; and we'll go our own way, and laugh and play, and if we get wrong and silly, and of no account in the world, it isn't our fault, is it? He wouldn't help us and lead us—he don't care what becomes of us."

"Oh, Christabel, Christabel, it is you who are cruel!" burst from Aubrey, hoarsely. "You try me too sorely. If you could know—could see—"

She tossed Puff to the sofa and faced around to him. It was wonderful what dignity and imperious womanliness that slight young figure could assume. Two vivid scarlet spots burned hotly in her cheeks, and her eyes were like stars; but she spoke calmly—almost coldly.

"If I could know—if I could see—what? Not your pride—for you show me some new revelation of that every time I see you, Mr. Roscoe. Not your prudence—your letter to papa is a charming specimen of that. What then?"

He stood looking at her mournfully.

"Yes, I am proud," he sighed; "too proud to forget that you are the great banker's heiress."

Could she doubt his meaning? Could she fail to read the passionate, yearning tenderness that throbbed tumultuously in his heart? No. She knew it. She had read it as soon almost as she had fathomed her own. She knew he loved her. Her cheek burned hotly beneath her consciousness that her own secret must likewise be revealed to him. And yet he would not speak, and his pride built up the barrier that her maidenly modesty must never dare assail. No wonder the fiery little creature, thwarted in no other wish of her life, secretly raged and rebelled.

"Perhaps we are both proud," she breathed presently, in a soft, low voice; "but it is you alone who are cruel. But let us beware of quarrelling now that you have really come again. You take back that cruel threat of giving up my lessons. Papa, himself, begged you to continue them, I know, for he told me so. He says no other teacher has ever managed so successfully his wild little pet. And that is true. Come, Mr. Roscoe, let us shake hands and be friends again."

She held out to him the little snowflake hand, with her most bewitching smile on the coaxing lips; and Aubrey, conquering his agitation, took it in his for just a dizzy, entranced moment; then, dropping it suddenly, seized upon the book as his only safeguard.

"Where is that spirit? Here, you Ariel!" called out Christabel, gaily. "Sit you down on the divan, and keep Puff contented, and make yourself busy with these!" She pushed the tray of bonbons toward him, and Ariel, nothing backward, proceeded

to discuss the delicious comfits. "You needn't call Madame Brent for half an hour. The good old soul is taking her first nap, I am sure, and it is a pity to disturb it. Now, Mr. Roscoe, shall I read the translation I made? And you shall keep the book."

She hunted out of a gold-bound portfolio a sheet of creamy paper, and a pencil-case sparkling with a diamond head, and stood up before him demurely, casting shy and roguish glances through the long silky eyelashes.

What a winsome, bewitching fairy she was! Surely Aubrey Roscoe's was a noble and gallant heart, that he resisted the temptation to clasp her then and there to the breast that idolized her very image!

She read the translation through before she received any correction; then he quietly pointed out three or four errors, and himself re-wrote the sentences.

She put on a demure gravity as she watched him.

"How much wiser you are than I shall ever be! I tried so hard with that translation. I wanted you to find me very clever and praise me. And now there are so many mistakes, I am ashamed. But wait till we come to the conversation. I can talk better than I can translate."

"No question about that," returned Aubrey, with the first glimpse of a roguish smile.

At which she clapped her hands like a gleeful child.

"Now you are yourself again. You are no longer thinking of cruel possibilities. See if you can keep up with me!"

And she rattled off into a long tirade of French, interspersed with little, saucy nods and dimpled smiles, and all those pretty, coquettish airs a lovely woman understands so well how to use, so that the poor, bewildered teacher could only stand dumb in a daze of admiration.

"Well!" she cried, at length, when, vent of breath had compelled a pause, "why don't you answer me?"

"What would you have me say?" he returned, gaily, "when I have hardly yet caught my breath, only listening to such a torrent of words, without venturing to follow their meaning. I think you might pass for a true Frenchwoman anywhere, even at a fête at St. Cloud."

"Are you going to the county ball?" she asked, abruptly. "Papa says you will, of course, have tickets. Your family is too old and aristocratic not to be among the first selected."

"I can't say. Ethel was speaking about it the other day, and on Captain Vansittart's account mamma favoured the idea," replied he, thoughtfully.

"Why don't you bring your sister to see me? I should love her dearly, I know; only I am almost afraid of her, she must be so wise and good. You are all so proud—"

He sighed.

"Do you call it pride? We have thought it to be humility. We will not go out while unable to present such appearance as has hitherto marked our position. Yes, I suppose we are proud."

"And pride is wicked and cruel," asserted Christabel, her face all aglow with eagerness.

He looked down into the fair young face wistfully, murmuring:

"If only the hope held out to us be not a deceitful one."

"Then it is as I surmised," cried Christabel. "Something has brightened you out of that black melancholy which hung over you the last time you were here. You meant to say farewell then, but something has brightened you, and so you came today."

"Yes," he returned, dreamily, "that is true. A beautiful hope has whispered beguiling promise in my ears. Sweet Christabel, pray that it may not prove a delusion."

Her beautiful eyes misted over with tender dew. "I will pray for it morning, noon, and night," whispered she.

Here there was a rustle of a sweeping silken skirt, and Ariel, starting up hastily, made way for a tall, portly figure, that sailed majestically through the curtained doorway.

Christabel took her book hastily, and Aubrey, colouring faintly, spread out the page of translation, and seemed to be absorbed with it.

"Ah, Madame Brent. So your siesta is over?" said Christabel, with a careless nod. "I told Ariel he needn't disturb you. Congratulate Mr. Mr. Roscoe admits that I have given him a wonderfully perfect lesson to-day. He takes back all he has thought about my stupidity."

"Good day, Mr. Roscoe," said the dignified chamberlain, "we are happy to see you again. Go on; don't let me disturb you."

And then there was a closely-attentive recitation. The teacher spoke in soft, low tones, and the pupil responded in still more subdued accents.

When it was ended Christabel danced lightly before him.

"Ariel, set out the luncheon tray in the little music room. Mr. Roscoe must judge of my accent in the new French ballad I shall sing to him while he lunches, and cheat him into thinking himself in fairyland."

"That would be nothing new," replied Aubrey. "I always feel as if I had been thrust from an enchanted palace when I go out from here."

"At least you shall carry tangible proof of your visit," she laughed, and broke off a spray of rosebuds for him.

Then she sang the ballad for him in the merry fashion of a giddy child, and teased him at the luncheon tray, and set Puff to bark at him, and went through a dozen such caprices as made the lovely little heiress the horror and amazement of all the staid Mrs. Grundys of her own wealthy set. But she was lovely alike in all moods to Aubrey Roscoe, the hardest to resist, however, when, as he rose to take leave, she put her little dainty hand in his, with soft, serious eyes fixed earnestly upon his face, and faltered:

"Remember, Mr. Roscoe, I shall pray for your hope to come true speedily."

He could have gathered her closely in his arms, so warmly his heart yearned to her, but he remembered that she was the great banker's sole heiress, and he only the portionless scion of a decayed house. So he just pressed the pearly finger tips, murmured a commonplace adieu, and took leave.

The moment he had gone Christabel flung herself upon the lounge in a passion of tears.

"Will his pride never melt?" she demanded, fiercely. "Will he compel me to throw myself at his feet before he will speak a single word?"

And Aubrey walked swiftly away, ejaculating mentally:

"Oh, that it would not be dishonourable in me to take this precious gift unasked! Oh, if only the emeralds are found, and our fortunes restored!"

## CHAPTER XVII.

"I am happy to inform you that your rooms in the town are now at your service, Mr. Osborne," said Lady Blenkarn, as she met him at the library door one morning, about ten days after their visit to the studio building; "and as I know you must be naturally anxious to inspect them, I propose that you take a holiday. John tells me his charge is unusually quiet and docile, which will facilitate the arrangement. I hope you will be as pleased with taking possession as I have been in gathering together. I confess I am almost sorry that everything is completed. I have enjoyed it so much as an altogether novel experience."

And she sighed a little as she placed the key within his hand.

"Nay," returned Frank, earnestly, "your ladyship is unjust to your own benevolent heart. Brief as my acquaintance is in the neighbourhood, I have already heard more than one instance of your secret kindness to the poor and unfortunate. The fisherman down by the Bend told me, with tears in his eyes, how you provided all the necessaries of burial for his drowned boy, when otherwise he must have had a pauper's funeral."

"Ah, that was so little to do; and the case was so dreadful—their only child drowned!" Here a shiver ran through her frame, and she turned pale and looked singularly distressed while she went on, in low, agitated tones: "It is so terrible to have any one drowned! Do you suppose, Mr. Osborne, that it is a very painful death?"

She hung upon his answer with such solicitude that a wild idea crossed his mind. Was she contemplating such a death for herself—this strange, gifted, beautiful, and yet evidently isolated and wretched woman? Upon the impulse of this thought he returned for answer:

"Yes; undoubtedly very painful—a death no sane person can contemplate calmly."

She shuddered again, and leaning against the tall back of the chair, seemed to be struggling against some strong agitation.

Frank bent down over the open portfolio of engravings which was lying on the table, and waited in respectful silence.

"Well, well," she spoke presently, in the clear, calm dignity of her usual manner, "we are wandering from our subject. As I said before, I trust you will take as much pleasure in occupying as I have done in getting ready your suite of rooms. I fancy your next-door neighbour, who had the first choice, will question the soundness of his judgment."

"I have met him," volunteered Frank, not sorry of an opportunity to introduce the name. "He is just from Calcutta—a Captain Vansittart—though I confess I cannot detect anything military in his appearance; and he is in Exeter as a visitor to Colonel



[AIMEE'S TERRACE.]

Blenkarne, to whom I was also introduced the other day."

He glanced toward her face as he finished. It had been marbly pale, but it flushed over now with a fiery glow rather than blush of crimson. There was just a little dilation of the proud nostril, a loftier poise of the stately head; but she kept silence.

The entrance of a servant interrupted the—for Frank—rather awkward pause.

"The same woman who was so importunate yesterday is here again now, my lady. She declares she must see you, and this time sends up her name. It is Esther Sanderson."

Lady Blenkarne started at the name, and clasped both hands fiercely against her heart. With what seemed the extreme effort of a powerful will, she compelled herself to answer, coldly:

"Very well, send her up, and I will see her shortly." But the moment the servant disappeared she fell down into the nearest chair, hiding her ashen face in her shaking hands, and murmuring in wild, piteous tones: "Am I never to have peace? Oh, am I never to have peace?"

Frank stood a moment irresolute, and then filled a goblet with water from the stand, and set it silently beside her.

She drank it with feverish eagerness, and then looking up with a dreary smile, she said:

"Go. Do not trouble yourself about me—go, and be happy."

"Is there nothing I can do to be of service?" he ventured.

She shook her head, and answered in a sorrowful, despairing voice, that haunted him all the day:

"No. No one can help me. I am the wretched prey of two fiends, remorse and vengeance. Neither of them will leave me in peace. Go your own way, and be not troubled by any generous compassion for me. Seek not to penetrate the dark mysteries of this place, but go out into your own free, unclouded path."

The wave of her hand was his usual signal of dismissal, and he obeyed it now. He waited, however, until he saw the unknown visitor whose name had caused so much agitation, passing slowly down the avenue. Almost immediately afterward he heard her ladyship's balcony door unclose, and, looking forth, he saw her descending the steps.

He watched her progress with a vague uneasiness as she threaded her way through the garden walks, never making any pause until she had reached the wilderness which the Nemesis statue guarded. There she disappeared. It was almost with a guilty feeling of remissness in duty that the young man finally

yielded to her command, and mounting his horse rode off to the town.

And it smote him with a new keenness when his key admitted him to what seemed a transported portion of some Eastern Caliph's palace, and revealed the extent of his benefactress' bounty and careful study. It was plain to see the upholsterers had obeyed orders, not given them. Frank realized at once that there was hardly such another apartment in the United Kingdom. Such a peculiar and prodigal, and yet dainty taste, was visible in everything, from the texture and tint of the damask hangings to the shape of the Roman vases. The colour of the damask and carpet and ottomans was a dark claret, which might have seemed a little gloomy, but for the rich gold trimmings and the few rare, bright-toned pictures, one on each wall, representing scenes from the four quarters of the globe, and the same number of pieces of marble statuary. Moreover, on the opposite wall, facing the window, was a large full-length mirror, artfully fixed at such an angle as to reflect a picture which put to shame the finest there upon canvas, that of the broad window, which was completely framed in a rainbow garland of vines artfully twined from the Chinese porcelain pots set within a gilded lattice work. And this mirror passed on the picture to still another on the other side.

The window seemed the chief d'œuvre upon which the chief thought had been exhausted. It stood out from the rest of the room as a diamond flashes from its heavy setting, or as a sunny blue sky looms upward in a sombre forest.

All the brightness and warmth and brilliancy of the scene seemed gathered there, and the light, fleecy lace which a Psyche and Ganymede held back on either side curtained nothing of its golden warmth and hid no single shape of its living picture, in the centre of which, above varying shade of green against fleecy clouds of silvered blue, rose the turrets and stately walls of Blenkarne Terrace, which, indeed, from a certain line, seemed close at hand, as a magnifying glass had been cunningly inserted in the window just where it crossed the vision.

"It is wonderful," murmured Frank Osborne, walking to and fro, glancing from the true to the mirrored semblance; "the window takes possession of the whole room, and Blenkarne Terrace inhabits it as by a living presence. Had her ladyship any design, I wonder, in compassing this result?"

The inner room was fitted up with every modern luxury, and tastefully arranged, but had been evidently left to the furnisher's commonplace taste. Frank soon returned from it, and sat down on one of the lounges, which were simply Eastern divans fitted

up with velvet pillows, into whose yielding softness one sank deeply, and looked around him dreamily, feeling very much as one might imagine of Aladdin in his magic cavern.

The sound of voices without roused him. He sprang up eagerly and hurried out, overtaking Colonel Blenkarne and his Calcutta visitor.

"What?" said Colonel Blenkarne, in surprise. "Is it you?"

"In veritable person," returned Frank. "I have just taken possession of my apartments. Will you not honour them by being the first visitors?"

"I saw them before," volunteered the East Indian, "and would not take them, they were so cold and dismal."

"Come and see if you find them so now," proposed Frank, with a proud and satisfied smile.

And the two gentlemen followed him as he threw open the door and led the way into the room, which struck him with a renewed charm, coming in from the dark, bare corridor.

Captain Vansittart uttered an involuntary ejaculation of astonishment and admiration, and stared around bewilderedly.

"A magical transformation certainly. Did you call in the aid of the fairies?" began Colonel Blenkarne, in a tone of pleasant courtesy.

But suddenly he stopped short, and the smile faded out of his face, and he put one hand up as if to shade his dazzled eyes, or to ward off some unpleasant sight, and whirled around with his back to the window. But there again the mirrors confronted him and flashed back the same picture—the marble Psyche and Ganymede, holding back gauzy clouds of lace, brilliant wreathing framework, the lovely landscape, and Blenkarne Terrace. He made another involuntary contortion to escape the sight, but finding it impossible, sat with pale face and working lips struggling hard to assume the composure he could not feel.

Frank was too much excited and gratified to notice it. Perhaps there was a little pardonable exultation in witnessing the East Indian's surprise and chagrin. He was, however, presently aware of the restless shifting of position by which Colonel Blenkarne sought to escape the sight of those stately towers which had once been his home, and promised inheritance. An attempt which was futile, for unless one closed his eyes, from whatever position he might take, either from the mirrors or the window flashed out the same scene. This discovery soon came to Frank, and haunted him with an uncanny influence not easily shaken off.

(To be continued.)





[LADY VENGEA INTERFERES.]

## JOSEPHINE BEAUVILLIERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

*"Lady Juliette's Secret," "The Rose of Kemdale,"*  
etc., etc.

## CHAPTER XVI.

She was good as she was fair.  
None—none on earth above her!  
As pure in thought as angels are:  
To know her was to love her.

Rogers.

ABOUT half-past ten Paul Clement, work being over in the surgery and study for the day, came and looked in at the door. It was only Diana that his eyes sought, and soon he found her engaged in cheerful tête-à-tête with the colonel of Chatteris's regiment. He was a fine-looking man of middle age, a widower, and possessed of a good fortune. If she could captivate such an adorer it would be a good match for Miss Dalby. Paul Clement watched her, and his heart sank.

"I am an idiot," he said to himself, "ever to cherish one single hope in that quarter. Sometimes she is kind, sometimes she is cool; never does she look at me with what can be called love. All this is more than I can endure. I shall not wait for supper, I shall not join the dancers."

And he was turning away, when suddenly his eye caught that of Diana. She beckoned to him.

"Some of the ladies want partners, Mr. Clement," she said, and she pointed to three or four rather plain young ladies who seemed to be a little neglected. "I have been waiting for you anxiously," she added, "and now I know you will make yourself agreeable, as you always do."

And she waved him off again as pleasantly as she had called him to her side. He went away obedient to her lightest behest, but it must have been a dull and dreary ball for him—dancing with those uninteresting young ladies the while Diana flirted to her heart's content with the rich and handsome colonel.

And so the ball went on, some were merry, some were sad, some were pleased and gratified, some disappointed and enraged.

At half-past eleven came the supper—really a magnificent affair, laid out in the great dining-room. Josephine of course remained in the ball-room.

Chatteris contrived to bring her some of the richest delicacies from the supper table.

After supper dancing was renewed, and the labours of Josephine commenced again, and so on till she grew wearied.

It was two o'clock in the morning now. Her temples were throbbing painfully, her eyes looked hollow

and bright, she was very pale. They had danced the last dance in the programme, and she was striving to slip out unobserved, when there was a loud cry raised among the dancers for another galop, and she was about to take her place again listlessly at the piano when a young gentleman approached her, a rather fat-faced, somewhat puffy young gentleman, with short hair and small black eyes.

"Permit me, Miss Beauvilliers," said he, politely, "to play the last galop for the company. I should have offered before, but I thought you might perhaps think me intrusive."

Josephine bowed, thanked him; and was hastily beating a retreat when she heard a sharp voice say in her ear:

"Do you know who he is? He is the son of Sir Thomas Wagstaff, and he is heir to thousands a year. When you are ready I am ready."

Josephine bowed.

"Ah! I see you have learned a little politeness, despite your English bringing up."

Josephine hurried into the cloak-room, equipped herself and was crossing the hall in a hurry when Chatteris approached her. He had buttoned himself into his greatcoat.

"You will allow me to offer you my arm, Miss Beauvilliers," said he.

As he spoke he opened the door, and Josephine was about to take his arm, when the same sharp voice which had electrified her two or three times that evening exclaimed:

"Not so fast, gallant captain. I am going to take Miss Beauvilliers home in my carriage."

The carriage of Lady Vengea was drawn up before the door. Prancing horses, liveried footmen, all were in attendance. Lady Vengea laid her hand with a grasp almost savage on the arm of Josephine.

"Come along," she said, in a tone of most tyrannical authority. "You know I told you that I did not intend you to flirt any more with this idle young soldier."

Chatteris was terribly perplexed. He could not use his physical strength against a woman, but he was desperately enraged at this intolerable and insolent interference.

"Madam," he said, "you have no power over Miss Beauvilliers, none whatever; but this young lady shall choose between us. If she likes to accept your offer of a drive home in your carriage, I will withdraw. If, on the contrary, she prefers the support of my arm, then I will trouble you to withdraw," and the tone of Chatteris was exceedingly decisive.

"Decide, Josephine," cried Lady Vengea; "either disgrace yourself by parading the streets at this

hour of the night with a man who is as good as married to another woman, or else you will take your place in your carriage, and, under the protection of a lady, you shall be conducted safely to your home."

The door was open, the servants were listening, and the words of Lady Vengea were very cutting and scornful, especially when she spoke of Josephine's disgracing herself by parading the streets at that hour of the night with a man who was as good as married to another woman.

Hastily then and timidly Josephine withdrew her arm from that of the captain.

"I had better," she said, "go with this lady, as she is so kind as to ask me."

The captain bowed and withdrew. Two minutes more and Josephine was seated side by side with the Lady Vengea Tempestcloud. The carriage was rattling over the stones. Josephine waited timidly.

At last she said:

"Does your ladyship know where I live?"

"It is of no consequence," responded her ladyship, drily.

And the carriage now left the stones. Josephine became aware that it was rolling over a country road.

"Madam, my lady!" she said, starting with terror, "where am I going to?"

"Be tranquil!" responded her ladyship, sternly. "You are going to a very good place. You have done with Northwick St. John's for the present. You are going to live under my protection."

"This woman is surely mad," thought poor Josephine, and her heart froze with terror.

"Madam," she said, "are you taking me away from my parents, whose chief support I am? They will want every comfort and necessary if they lose me."

"All that is arranged for," responded Lady Vengea. "I have sent your father one hundred pounds, and I am sure you do not earn half that in the twelvemonth. I have told your father before to-day of my intention of removing you from Northwick St. John's. I have taken you away in my own fashion. I do everything according to my own rules. There."

And as she spoke she handed a paper to Josephine.

"Now, can you read that by the light of the carriage lamp?" inquired Lady Vengea.

It was positively a letter written by the hand of her father. Josephine read it with the greatest astonishment.

"My dear Josephine," began the letter, "do not be afraid of the Lady Vengea Tempestcloud; she is a

true friend. She is peculiar in her way of going to work, but she will protect you—nay, she will provide for you, enrich you. I had an interview with her two days since, when she told me of her plan for removing you from the influence of the young gentleman who has been persecuting you with his attentions. She has given me a hundred pounds, and as long as you remain with her she will send me the like sum every year. You see that by this means we shall be much better off than if you remained at home. The conduct of Lady Vengea may astonish you, but I believe that I have a true clue to the mystery. She is an extraordinary person, and one whom it would never do to offend. You will probably have duties to perform in your new position. Depend upon it that her ladyship intends to provide for you for life—that is to say, Josephine, she will provide you with a husband. I have reason to know that she has already arranged a marriage for you; and, Josephine, hesitate not, accept the gentleman, even though he be old, or ugly, according to your romantic school-girl notions. Remember the curse of poverty under which you have withered from your birth, and now that curse is about to be removed. A hundred a year will make us comfortable in our quiet way for the present, and after your marriage it is to be increased to three hundred a year. Think of this, Josephine, think of this. If you rebel and refuse, then this hundred a year will be removed, and we shall be re-plunged in the Slough of Despond. Hitherto you have laboured for your family—henceforth you will not be called upon to labour, but only to marry a rich husband. I know your romantic notions, your sentimental, pure, yet passionate and poetic temperament—and I fear that when you are introduced to the Count Potowski (I have seen his photograph, by the way), that you will sigh and shudder; and perhaps refuse him. Oh! Josephine, Josephine, think of your unhappy parents and your helpless little brothers, and do not sacrifice unto the sickly sentimentality of a school-girl.

"Ever your affectionate father,"

"BEAUVILLIERS."

Josephine stared in blank amazement, first at the letter and then at the imperturbable countenance of the Lady Vengea.

"After all," thought she to herself, "it seems to be my fate to sacrifice myself for others. Had Chatteris been free, and loving me as he does, I would never have given my hand to another man, even though I dared not hope ever to clasp his again. But now, when I am about to lose him for ever, what does it matter? I prefer freedom and liberty, poverty and hard work, but I cannot have what I prefer. This count, whose photograph papa has seen, must be terribly ugly, I suppose. Well, what does that matter? The handsomest man in the world would never touch my heart, for it is all—

all given to Chatteris."

And Josephine, in spite of herself, for she was

fatigued, began to sob bitterly.

"You have read the letter," said Lady Vengea, with a stern smile, "and it makes you weep to think you are going to be asked to marry an ugly man; but you must get rid of all those foolish notions. Yonder popinjay, Chatteris, only won your heart for his own amusement. Now he has broken it and flung it away. Gather up the pieces, fasten them together with the cement of common-sense—put a brave face on the matter, child. I am interested in your welfare. I married once myself for love, and what did it bring me to? Madness! Your mother married for love, and what did it bring her to? Misery! for the curse of a mother was pronounced against her."

Here the large eyes of the Lady Vengea flashed fire—a strange, unearthly fire it seemed to Josephine. She set her teeth hard, her face grew livid, and the expression was such as made the young girl shudder; she felt as though she were shut up in close proximity with some unholly spirit.

"If I were so minded I could blight you with a word. I could wither you with a look. I am terrible in my wrath—those who once offend me perish miserably."

Here the Lady Vengea waved her finger and pointed it menacingly at Josephine.

Josephine shrank into a corner of the carriage. She began to reflect, to wonder, to ask herself questions. At last she said, suddenly:

"Who are you, madam? Are you my grandmother, Lady Woodville, of whom I have heard?"

Lady Vengea grasped her arm savagely.

"Stop, stop!" she cried. "You dare to pronounce that name or to ask a single, prying impertinent question, and I will annihilate you with a look. That Constance Wyatt, afterwards Lady Woodville, of whom you speak, is dead—dead—do you hear me, dead? I knew her; she was a poor, weak idiot"—here Lady Vengea shook her head and smiled her grim,

awful smile. "She is dead, I tell you. I saw her in her coffin years ago—years, years ago. You need not think you have any rich grandmother alive. She would have died in a workhouse if it had not been for me. And now all you have to do is just to follow my advice and obey my orders, and you, in the third generation, will fare better than your mad grandmother and your imbecile mother."

"If I could only escape from this terrible woman," thought Josephine, "I would spring out of this carriage, even while it is going so fast, and while it is so dark. My father cannot know he has consigned me to the care of a species of fiend in human form."

And then she looked through the thick window-glass, which was all obscured with the fog of the night. There was very little moonshine, but what there was revealed to her the outline of the bare trees and hedges, which seemed to be running away from the carriage. Josephine perceived that they were riding at a headlong speed.

#### CHAPTER XVII.

Cursed be the sickly forms.

That cry against the strength of youth.

Cursed be the ancestral lies.

That warn us of the living truth. *Tragedy.*

It was in the dressing-room, at Dr. Dalby's, a fast-night after the ball, that Diana sat knitting before a blazing red fire. She lounged back on a low, luxurious chair. Presently her work dropped from her hands into her lap, and her eyes fixed themselves absently, and with a dreamy gaze upon the glistening flames, which were really dancing upon the wide chimney-place.

The room in which Diana sat was the same which had been used for the ball. Everything was now restored to its usual order; the rich carpet was again upon the floor—the chairs and couches and tables, the commodes and chiffoniers were all arranged with that apparently careless, though really scrupulous, taste which distinguished the doctor's beautiful dwelling.

Diana herself, dressed in a dark blue silk, trimmed round the throat and wrists with white swansdown, and with a fine gold chain that twisted in and out amid the coils of her luxuriant dark hair, was the very impersonation of piquant grace and brilliant beauty.

Presently Diana began to muse aloud, for she was alone in the large drawing-room. She turned her eyes from the fire, and looked towards the three windows which commanded a view of the old-fashioned street. The cold March winds were sweeping the roadway—the pavement looked clean and bleak, empty almost of foot-passengers. Now and anon an errand-boy might pass with a basket, a policeman might march along with his heavy, swinging tread, an old woman might hobble forward, aided by her stick, or a middle-class lady of Northwick St. John's might hurry towards the business part of the town, dressed in the fashion of the year before last. The opposite houses had the curtains closely drawn; not a head appeared at the windows of these respectable dwellings where abode prim, rich old maids, sober, steady matrons, and matter-of-fact, well-to-do professional men.

"Oh, Northwick St. John's is a dreary old place," broke forth Diana, aloud; "a dreary old place, and inhabited by a dreary and dull set of people. Now and then, perhaps, in twelve months there is a ball. If no one else gives one, we give one. And then it is all very funny and very foolish, and not very fashionable according to London ideas—and after the ball all one's friends abuse one; that is ever the mode in a country town. I go to a gloomy dinner-party, if I choose, once a week, and there whom do I meet? A lot of stout, respectable men, and their wives; Mrs. Colonel Tighly, with her crotchets and her aristocratic reminiscences—a sprinkling of officers from the garrison, who think the whole set desperately slow, myself excepted perhaps, and they would flirt with me if they could—but where is the use?" and Diana's beautiful lip curled ironically. "They are most of them younger sons, and have papas and mammas to consult, who would lead them a sad life, and cut them off with a shilling, if either of them presumed to ally himself with a country doctor's daughter, who would only have two hundred pounds a year to call her own. For the rest, what could be more monotonous and dreary than the life in Northwick St. John's itself? Was there ever a town duller or more stupid? Did ever scandal-mongers scandalize as they do here? Were old maids ever so censorious? or matrons with marriageable daughters more spiteful? Sunday is the only day on which the streets are peopled, and then nearly everybody looks guilty, as if he or she had no right to be out. Oh, I hate a country town—a dreary, self-opinionated, self-righteous, narrow-minded, scandalous, stupid country town."

Diana rose to her feet and took a promenade upon

the flowery carpet of the long and handsome drawing-room.

She stopped suddenly before a magnificent mirror with a marble slab, on which were placed many vases and valuable nicknacks; but it was not to contemplate these that Diana stood in front of the glass; it was to look curiously at the reflection of her own beauty.

"I am beautiful," said Diana, still continuing her soliloquy aloud, "and I suppose that my beauty ought to do something for me; at least it ought to lift me out of this life of dull routine which I am now leading—and I suppose it would if I listened to the pleadings of Colonel Hastings. Can I do better? Let me count the advantages which I should derive from an alliance with him, should I enter into one."

"First of all he is rich, very rich; he can take me to London and give me a town house furnished in any style which I may choose; he can give me a carriage, footmen, and an opera-box. My toilets may be superb, my jewels magnificent. I shall have no more dull dinner parties. I need not fear the gossip or scandal of the prim old maids or the spiteful matrons of Northwick St. John's. Instead of looking out upon that dreary street, where I see only a baker's boy carrying a basket, a poor old woman hobbling along with a stick, or a stout woman in a vulgar plaid shawl, I should in the season look out upon a variety of splendid equipages, prancing horses, gilded chariots, exquisite bulles, perfect toilets. Life would change very much for me, if I became Mrs. Colonel Hastings, and yet—and yet I—"

Diana paused for a moment in her reckoning, then hastily continued:

"Well, he is very rich, his family comes of noble stock; besides all this, he is a polished gentleman, he is handsome, he is chivalrous, he is elderly." Again she paused. "He must be fifty-four at least; but why, why should I object to him on that score? He is worth all the silly young men with blushing, sheepish faces whom I meet at my dull dinner parties and yearly balls. All the silly young men. Yes; but there is one who is not silly."

Diana smiled, and looked away sadly from her own reflection in the looking-glass.

She resumed her walk along the flowery carpet. Still that sad smile was upon her lip, and she looked down at the rhododendrons and tulips and other flowers of the late spring season which were artistically grouped upon the dark-green ground of the rich Brussels.

But she saw not the pattern of the flowery carpet, although she was contemplating it so steadfastly.

"There is one who is not silly," repeated Diana, "one through whose fine countenance the fire of the soul and the light of the intellect shine as of a lamp shines through a vase of Parian marble. But what is the use of my thinking of this fine soul and intellect, of this beautiful, stern young face? I shall never have more than two hundred a year of my own; my tastes are expensive, very expensive; my ideas and habits are extravagant, luxurious, naturally splendid and prodigal. Fortunatus's purse would scarcely satisfy all the demands of my restless vanity and selfish thirst for pleasure. I am not good enough, half noble enough, for this hero of my imagination, I had almost said of my heart." And here Diana sighed. "I must abandon all thoughts of him. Oh! that you were rich, Paul Clement. Oh! that you even had a competence. But you must toil and grind and wear away the brightness of your eyes with midnight studies; and even when you have done all this you will be far from earning bread-and-cheese even for yourself. Oh! mad folly of Diana Dalby to dream a wild dream in which her father's assistant figures as the hero! He loves me, I cannot be mistaken in that; but what is the use of loving me with my expensive notions and extravagant tastes? I should be miserable if I were to be married upon my two hundred a year. True, it would be sufficient to provide us with food and raiment; but could I learn therewith to be content? I believe not, I fear not. How should we furnish our house? where should we live? Mamma would never speak to me again, and papa would break his heart."

Diana turned away from the mirror, and again paced up and down the room. Presently there came a loud, startling rap at the hall-door. The expensive ornaments upon the marble slab vibrated to the sound.

Diana went and sat again upon the silken chair, resumed her work, and put on an air at once calm, smiling and expectant. She was an ambitious girl; love and ambition were struggling for the mastery in her soul, and it seemed now that ambition had carried the day. She knew whose knock it was that had reverberated through her father's house. Colonel Hastings, the rich and aristocratic lover, had arrived. Another three minutes and he stood in her presence, smiling, bowing, and extending his hand. Diana



extended hers to meet his, and then the two sat down before the blazing fire, and the conversation flowed on space like a clear and sparkling rivulet wandering through flowery banks, or under the shade of green summer boughs; for they conversed of nothing that was not pleasant and pretty and agreeable.

Nobody would have thought that listened to Diana while she spoke of this delightful dinner-party and that amusing ball that she had just now been so bitterly inveighing against the spiteful old matrons and scandalizing old maids, the dull dinner parties and insipid balls of Northwick St. John's. It was not her policy to appear as a discontented damsel in the eyes of her wealthy and aristocratic suitor. She would not have had him suppose that she accepted his attentions in hopes of obtaining the diamonds and opera boxes, the carriages, horses and liveried servants with which it was in his power to endow her. No; for him she was the smiling, satisfied, piquant, graceful Diana Dalby, with no other care than to amuse and delight and to fascinate the world generally, and Colonel Hastings in particular.

The colonel himself was desperately enamoured of Diana. It did not matter to him that he was the brother of an earl, and she was only the daughter of a doctor in a little country town. He was madly desirous of making her Mrs. Colonel Hastings.

At last the colonel drew his chair nearer to the chair of Diana, he bent his head lowly, and he addressed to her words of which she could not mistake the meaning. He offered her, in short, his hand, his heart, his splendid home. He told her he should soon retire now from the army—immediately if she would marry him. He told her of his great country house, which had been lying empty during the time that he had been absent with his regiment; that it should all be renovated for her reception; and then he waited anxiously and with changing colour for her answer.

It was very slow to come. Diana's heart beat fast and her beautiful cheek was pale and red by turns. She was as much agitated as the colonel himself in regard to the answer which she was about to give him. Should it be yes, should it be nay? Her whole future trembled in the balance at that moment, and not only her own future but the future of the colonel and of the noble-hearted student, Paul Clement. At last she spoke, and her answer came in faltering tones.

"Yes," she said, "Colonel Hastings, I will be your wife."

He raised her hand to his lips enthusiastically, and then followed rhapsodies and frantic protestations of devotion, such as you would hardly have thought could have been uttered by a staid and middle-aged colonel in a cavalry regiment.

Diana listened to all with a smile—a patient, weary smile it would have seemed to any but an excited and interested individual like the colonel. He went on with his rhapsodies; Diana appeared to listen, but her thoughts were far distant.

She had done it now, she had sealed her own fate, she had given up her liberty and her future life into the keeping of this elderly man, whom she did not love.

The colonel drew from his breast-pocket a purple morocco case, and he placed it on the table by her side.

"Open it, adorable Diana," he exclaimed, "all it contains is yours."

Diana opened the case, and in spite of herself her eyes sparkled as brightly as the jewels which it contained—a necklace, brooch, earrings, cross, and massive bracelets of the most magnificent rubies and diamonds.

"All are yours," said the colonel, in a low, husky tone; "these jewels are valued at eighty thousand pounds."

Very few women are proof against the splendid fascination exercised by sparkling and precious gems. The colour came again to Diana's lovely cheek and the weary smile gave place to one of bright and joyous excitement.

"How beautiful!" she said, "how magnificent!" And then she thought she would wear the jewels at the hunt ball at the end of the hunting season; and then she said to herself that she would dazzle the eyes of the spiteful old maids, scandalous matrons, and envious daughters of Northwick St. John's.

"How generous, how kind of you, Colonel Hastings!" she said, in a frank, girlish tone.

It was quite genuine and unassumed. And when she began to reflect upon the delight of her father, the pride of her mother, and the triumph of certain uncles and aunts, of whom she was the pet and the idol, she took for the time a very sunny view of her golden future.

The colonel remained to dinner.

Doctor Dalby always dined luxuriously at half-past seven o'clock.

The doctor was not rich, but he liked his comforts, and everything in his household was well appointed.

We will pass hastily over the congratulations of the father and mother, the rapture of the accepted suitor, and the triumph of Diana, who, since the gift of the diamonds, had gone over completely to the side of ambition, and stifled the voice of young love, who, like a robust and beautiful infant newly born into this world of care, ever now and anon raised a piteous cry, whose echoes reverberated through her generous soul and sensitive heart.

The colonel took his departure about ten o'clock, and soon after that the family prepared to retire to rest; but such a tumultuous excitement filled the whole being of Diana, that she soon saw it would be impossible to sleep.

She descended again to the drawing-room where she knew that the fire was not extinguished. She entered, and perceived Paul Clement seated before a table with his face buried in his hands. Prudence prompted the doctor's daughter to retire when she saw her father's assistant in this attitude of despair, but she listened not to the voice of prudence. She entered, she stood by the side of him; he looked up at her, and his face was ghastly.

"I must congratulate you, Miss Dalby," he said. "Your father came out into the surgery after dinner, and told me of the brilliant prospects which are open for you."

Diana was now as pale as Clement. She tried to smile, but the effort was too great for her. She almost staggered to a seat. Finally a revulsion of feeling came over the triumphant belle. She trembled, and burst into tears, then she sobbed violently. Not a word of love had ever passed between Diana and her father's assistant, and yet she had long known the state of his heart. Glancing up at him, she perceived him leaning partially against the handsome mantelpiece. And looking at her with his soft and brilliant eyes filled with an agonized pity, he said:

"Miss Dalby, why do you weep?"

"Because," she answered, between her violent sobs, "I have—I have sold myself for riches. Oh, Paul Clement, do you not pity me?"

He stood there in the manly strength of his beauty, in the glory of his youth and his intellectual powers, a man of whom any woman might be justly proud. She thought of the colonel, padded, painted and polished—old as her father.

Paul Clement had the head of a statesman, a great thinker, a giant in science, he was in himself a king among men. Diana felt that he was infinitely more valuable than all the colonel's diamonds.

"Diana," said Paul, in a low, deep voice. "I have loved you as a man loves but once in a lifetime—as man seldom loves; but I have always known that my passion was utterly hopeless. You have guessed my feelings, and now you honour me with your divine pity; but let no self-reproach mingle with your feeling—never imagine that I harbour one ungentle thought towards you. I am poverty-stricken, my position is paltry. Never waste a thought on me"—his voice faltered—"save one of pity."

Diana rose; she hurried from the room without one look at Clement. In her own chamber she wrapped herself in cloak and hood, and she placed the precious case of jewels in her bosom. Then she fled hastily down a back staircase, let herself out into the garden, and from thence through a postern door into the street.

Along the street she hurried, until she reached the country road. The cold March moon was shining, and the cold March wind was blowing. Whither was the beautiful Diana fleeing through the night?

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

With that sharp sound the white dawn's

creeping beams,

Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the mystery

Of folded sleep. The captain of my dreams

Ruled in the eastern sky. Tennyson.

WHITHER was Diana hurrying? Why were those priceless jewels concealed close to her heart?

She could hardly have answered herself—her eyes had opened upon the true state of her own feelings. Since Clement had declared his love in terms at once so elevated, so self-abnegatory, so touching, so tender, so honest, and so patient, the beautiful Diana felt and understood that to be his wife, and to win his love, would be a greater triumph for a true and noble woman than all the luxuries and splendours, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which a union with a man of wealth and of the world offered to her. She believed in her own soul that Clement was destined to write his name legibly, and in letters of flame, in the world's history. In science or in literature he would rise, and his fame would be glorious. He was one of Nature's noblemen—one of the world's heroes, and now Diana understood that she loved him, and had always loved him. True, she could not marry him. It would break her father's heart, under present circumstances, for Doctor Dalby was, like the majority of men, swayed

by that narrow ambition which is the way of the world. He could not see so far into the future as could Diana with the prophetic eye of love, but Miss Dalby was willing now to wait—to wait patiently for the days when the name of Clement should be great in the land.

"Her faith now was large in time, and that which shapes it to some perfect end."

She would have been comparatively happy but for the episode of that day. As it was, she was pledged hand and heart to Colonel Hastings.

"And yet I cannot marry him," murmured Diana; "it is impossible—he must know the truth. And meanwhile I could not rest, even one night, with his magnificent jewels in my possession. It seems as though they burned their way through my very flesh to my heart, and lay upon it a heavy burden, grievous to be borne."

Diana then was rushing along the country road which led to a small railway station where the train from London stopped at half-past eleven: at night on its way to the garrison town where the colonel was quartered.

There was no direct communication by rail at that time between Northwick St. John's and this garrison town, although one was in course of construction, and now it was Diana's object to reach this town, to seek the colonel in his private apartments, to throw herself upon his generosity, to entreat him to release her from her engagement, and then to restore to him his precious gems. It was a madcap's scheme, but Diana was excited, she was impulsive, she was overwrought.

She hurried along the roads, fearing nothing either from the lateness of the hour or the loneliness of the way, and then suddenly she heard voices, but what voices?

Coarse and savage tones, oaths blustering and terrible, at which ears polite shudder, were borne upon the sharp March wind, and then by the white moonlight she saw a group approaching her in the distance—two women and a man. Then Diana suddenly remembered her defenceless situation—her hand tightened upon the precious morocco case.

There was an old barn close at hand, divided from the road by a hedge; a five-barred gate led into the field.

Diana was active and light of foot, in a moment she had climbed the gate, the barn-door was open, the place was empty, save of a few trusses of straw. Since these appeared dry and clean, Diana went and crouched among them.

She had stood in the shadow when first she saw the group of swearers approaching her, and she hoped and believed that they had not perceived her.

They came on.

Presently she heard their ribald voices in the lane—one of the women was singing in a high-pitched, screeching key—they seemed to be going on.

Diana's heart beat fast, and then went up in thankfulness that they had not seen her.

All at once they stopped.

"Here's a place to sleep," cried one woman, "as warm as the lodgings in the town, and nothing to pay; let's turn in here and sleep."

"The door will be barred up," responded the man; with an oath.

"Come on," cried another female voice; "don't waste time out in the cold wind."

It seemed that this person continued her way towards Northwick St. John's, for Diana could hear the sound of her shrill piping voice, joining in with the wild cries of the March wind.

"They will all go on, I trust," thought poor Diana, "and if so I will return home, it is a shorter distance than to the railway station, and I am less likely to encounter such terrible people as those in the lane. I must have been half-distracted when I undertook the commission, without thinking of perils from tramps and such creatures. There, I believe they are gone on," for now she heard the drunken voice of the man chanting some wicked stave as he wound his way towards Northwick St. John's.

Bat, oh, horror! what was that dull sound?

It was the alighting of some heavy body on the hard, half-frozen ground of the ploughed field.

The woman who had at first said that the barn would be a drier and cheaper lodging than those in Northwick St. John's, was not to be deterred from making the trial by the representation of her friends. She had jumped from the top rail of the stile heavily to the ground, and now she made straight for the barn where lay poor trembling Diana. The woman entered. She made straight for the heap of trussed straw. Diana, burrowing deep amongst it, was completely hidden. A few tiles were off the roof, and the moonlight shone in, but only sufficiently to show the straw, and not the dark, crouching form of Diana. The woman came on, spread out some straw trusses, took off her cloak, laid down, and then covered herself with the cloak as with a counterpane.

In a few moments she began to snore, and poor Diana was oppressed by the strong scent of raw gin, which evidently this woman had been drinking freely only a few minutes before.

"She is asleep," thought Diana, "and she is half tipsy, and I may escape cautiously." Then she raised herself upon one arm, but she had been sadly mistaken in supposing that this woman, half-tipsy and fatigued as she was, was a heavy sleeper; probably this creature had passed through many scenes of danger and difficulty. She was, without doubt, well acquainted with the inside of a prison. She slept as all those sleep who have been accustomed to perils and surprises, and who have felt the necessity of caution, stealthiness and suspicion. The snoring woman was alert in an instant, awake. Leaning upon her elbow, holding her head on one side, the woman listened. From where she crouched, Diana could see her, still unperceived. She still remained perfectly still, the woman also was silent, still, attentive, afraid to move.

"Now, is she stronger than I am?" thought Diana. "If I attempt to leave this place, and she strives to prevent me, can I overcome her? It is but woman against woman. I am young and strong and active."

It was not cowardice that held Diana back, it was her natural refinement, her horror of engaging in an unladylike struggle with a creature of that description. Finally, the woman lay down again, and slept once more.

Cold kept Diana wakeful. She, accustomed to all the luxury of warm bedding, found the straw a sorry resting-place. The night wore slowly on, and still the woman snored.

Diana began to grow frightfully uneasy. She had a latch-key which let her in from her own garden to a door on a staircase which wound up to her own chamber. If she could get back before the servants were astir, well and good. If not, scandal would indeed be busy with her name. Diana was very fond of gardening, and she had petitioned for the use of the latch-key, so that she might be enabled, when visitors arrived, to escape up this private staircase and arrange her toilet before appearing in the drawing-room. By means of this latch-key it was that she had escaped from her father's house on this night. The very fact of her having petitioned for such a key, and her having made use of it in such a strange manner, would blight her name for ever in her native town were it once known.

"I must go back before daylight," thought Diana.

She began once more to move stealthily, making scarcely any rustle. She believed that her movements were unheard. She had left the straw heap, she was in the middle of the barn, when suddenly like a panther, fierce, stealthy, cunning, and cruel, the woman from the straw sprang upon her. So unexpected was the attack, that Diana, taken unawares, was at once overpowered, and borne heavily to the ground. The fearful woman's fingers were at her throat, clutching it desperately. Diana gasped for breath, the woman dragged her to the door of the barn, so that the moonlight should fall full upon her, and then looked into her face with a suspicious and wicked leer. The countenance of her assailant was one which Diana was never likely to forget. It was a hideous one. Probably this woman might have been nine and twenty or thirty years of age, her features were bloated by habitual intemperance, the bridge of the nose was broken, probably by a blow or a fall, the consequence of some drunken quarrel; the eyes, deep sunken and black as sloe, had a cunning power of their own. The hair of the creature was wild, rough, thick, and of a fiery red. She wore no cap, her disreputable broken bonnet had fallen off, her attire was such as may be seen on many a miserable female tramp who wanders from town to town begging, selling matches, telling fortunes, stealing, quarrelling, getting tipsy, leading the wild sinful life which evil spirits who hate the human species must rejoice to witness. The woman wore a brown petticoat, a linsay bodice, a grey cloak, all ragged, all dirty to a degree. The fingers of this horrible creature still clutched the delicate throat of Diana Dalby.

"What were you in there for?" she hissed out. "Watching me, ay, I'll warrant you."

The creature was half tipsy, and Diana was quick-witted enough to perceive that if she exercised sufficient diplomacy she might turn the revolting fact to her own advantage.

"I was not watching you," she said; "pray, let me go. Why should I watch you? I was only seeking a night's rest on the straw."

"A night's rest," echoed the creature, "then why do you go away before daylight? Ay, that won't do for me. You were going to give information about Peck's Farm. You are a police spy, you are."

Peck's Farm had been the scene six months before of a most appalling murder, and at the mention of it, Diana felt her blood freeze with terror, for her

instincts told her that this woman's conscience must be seared by the memory of that terrible crime, and that it was guilt which spoke in the voice and looked through the eyes of this woman of the barn.

"I do not understand you," faltered poor Diana. "I was never near the place you mention in all my life. Pray let me go."

But the woman pinned her down mercilessly to the chaff-covered ground.

Then Diana thought within herself that she would make one desperate struggle for her freedom. She was young and strong and active. Why should she not be a match for this half-tipsy creature who was oppressing her?

But Diana reckoned wrongly. True, she was young and strong and active, but the youth, strength and activity of a young lady nurtured delicately and surrounded from infancy with every material comfort are but feeble weapons when matched against the iron muscles, brazen nerves and animal prowess of a strong woman who has been insured from childhood to blows and hunger, cold and raggedness, heat and thirst, who has been accustomed to battle with the elements as with the savage of her own species. The muscles of such a woman are of steel, her blows fall heavy as a sledge hammer, her skin is almost as tough as the hide of a wild animal.

When Diana, therefore, strove at one desperate effort to cast the woman from her she received a cruel and stunning blow on the head, which deprived her of consciousness. How long she lay thus on the floor of the barn she never knew, and when she opened her eyes to consciousness the gray, cold morning was looking in at the barn-door, the terrible woman was gone.

Diana was alone. The blow upon her head had been so severe that the skin was cut. Blood was trickling down the side of her cheek.

Diana sat up and leaned against the wall. She felt deadly ill, but her first thought was for the jewels of Colonel Hastings. She felt for the case—alas! alas! it was gone. Not only was it gone, but her purse, containing two or three pounds had been extracted from her pocket. Her gold brooch and gold watch, which she had not been prudent enough to leave behind, were also taken.

The fearful woman of the barn had indeed made a splendid booty.

And now, what was the wretched Diana to do?

It would not be possible for her to break off her alliance with Colonel Hastings unless she could restore to him his priceless jewels. If she were to tell him the whole truth, and entreat him to institute a search after the thief, how could she be sure that he would believe her? It seemed so unnatural that a young lady should run away from her father's house in the middle of the night, carrying with her eighty thousand pounds worth of jewels, that she should traverse a cross-country road, encounter a savage female tramp in a lonely barn, endure violence from this female fiend, and come away stripped of all the wealth that she had carried.

Was it not likely that the colonel would imagine her base enough to have appropriated the jewels, and yet to have been anxious to break off her alliance with an elderly man? And another, and still stronger feeling prompted Diana to maintain silence. It was the fear which operates too much upon ladies, young and old, who live in small country towns—the fear of what the world would say. The gossip of these quiet, slow-going places exercises a fearful and terrible power, for which they will surely have to render an account at some future day.

Diana did not act as she would have acted had she lived in London or some other large capital city. She was afraid to seek for a detective, and set him upon the scent of the woman who had robbed her. She was afraid to stir in the matter here, in this terrible little gossiping town of Northwick St. John's.

What was she to do? Great Heavens! What was she to do? She sat down on the floor of the barn and wrung her hands. There seemed but one course open. She must return as though nothing was the matter, she must endeavour to reach her bedroom unobserved, and then when the colonel came she must smile as she had smiled hitherto, she must remain affianced to him, she must even marry him, unless, before the time appointed for that event, she could find means to restore the jewels to her rich suitor. She could never refuse him her hand, and say to him at the same time, "I have lost your family jewels; I have promised to marry you, and now I am going to break my promise." No; she must continue her engagement with Colonel Hastings.

Very wearily, and with much fear and trembling, Diana began to wend her way in the cold morning air towards Northwick St. John's. She drew her hood so far before her face that she hoped to escape recognition, should she meet anybody who knew her. For a long time she met no one at all. After a while

she encountered an old woman carrying a basket of eggs, apples, or potatoes. She went on again and met a ploughman in smock-frock, tramping heavily. She scarcely dared to raise her eyes to the people, not that it would have signified had she done so, since neither of them had ever seen her before, but now she approached the first street of the little town, and soon she stood upon the bridge where we first saw Josephine. She stood, we repeat, for she was fatigued, very much fatigued. She was faint and weak from the blow which the woman of the barn had dealt her, and to this stoppage on the bridge poor Diana owed many of the trials, perplexities and mortifications which beset her path for some time. She leant against the parapet. She loosened her hood that she might breathe more freely. The caution, which, while it had been unnecessary on the lone country road, she had practised she now forgot, and she turned her beautiful face towards the town heedless of the fact that some one was approaching her—some one with cautious, stealthy footsteps and musing gait.

It was one of the most noted gossips—one of the most dreaded scandal retailers of Northwick St. John's. It was Mrs. Wilcox, a widow with a small income, whose husband had been a minister of a dissenting community.

Mrs. Wilcox was herself a Scotchwoman. She had sandy-coloured hair, and eyes of very much the same hue. She was about forty-two years of age, and prided herself upon extreme gentility, and the most delicate propriety. In fact, Mrs. Wilcox set up as a model of perfection; she was never caught tripping; she had no weaknesses, faults, or failings, such as fall to the share of the greater portion of poor humanity. She lived in a small neat house, kept a small neat servant, and conducted all her small affairs in a small neat fashion. She was very willing—nay, anxious—to perform any services for those richer and in a higher sphere than herself. Did a family wish to go to the seaside, Mrs. Wilcox would with pleasure take care of their house during their absence. Were the children of rich parents ill with sore throat or croup, Mrs. Wilcox would manufacture black currant jelly, carry it to the houses of the rich folk, and, if they would allow her, gladly would she sit up with the little patients all night. These services, and many more of the same kind, earned for the cunning widow a reputation both for sanctity and benevolence in the little country town where she dwelt. But more solid benefits accrued to Mrs. Wilcox. In one or two instances she had received legacies of money, plate, and jewels from rich old maids, and old bachelors for whom she had prepared jellies and puddings, and whose dull moments she had beguiled, as they sat in their invalid chairs before their warm fires, with the most piquant little dishes of scandal which Northwick St. John's could supply.

Diana had an especial fear and dread of Mrs. Wilcox; her lynx eyes, of a reddish colour, her sneering mouth, her smile at once sly, supercilious, and hypocritical, her angular form and affected gait, were all especially hateful to the freedom-loving daughter of the doctor.

Mrs. Dalby was very partial to Mrs. Wilcox, and, much to Diana's disgust, this censorious dame was frequently invited to take a cup of tea in the early afternoon in the back parlour, where no fashionable visitors were admitted; and here she would relate all sorts of stories about all sorts of persons, turning up her eyes, and closing her lips tightly, after every sentence—anon she would regret the wickedness of the world, and of Northwick St. John's in particular.

Diana turned her pale sad face, we repeat, towards Northwick St. John's, and her eyes encountered the lynx eyes of Mrs. Wilcox, the minister's widow, and Mrs. Wilcox smiled a triumphant smile, she even bowed her head, she even spoke.

"Good morning, Miss Dalby," she said; "nice walking before breakfast. I do always—"

Diana could not answer in the same fashion, nor reply in the manner and tone assumed by Mrs. Wilcox; neither had she any command of her countenance. A crimson flush mounted to the very roots of her hair, she faltered out:

"Good morning!" and then hurried forward with tottering footsteps.

Mrs. Wilcox looked after her, and smiled her cruel smile, and shook her hypocritical head; and meanwhile Diana went on, her ears burning, her heart beating, her blood racing madly through her veins. She encountered nobody else who knew her at that early morning hour, and she reached St. Peter's Street, and turned down by the dead wall, where was the gate leading into their garden, through which she had escaped. This gate was fortunately open; there were no fruits or flowers to steal at that early part of the year, and the good folks in towns like Northwick St. John's are not afraid of burglars



So Diana managed to get into the garden, and from thence to the back door, and so up the private staircase to her own chamber. Once arrived there, she undressed and went to bed, and when her maid came to call her in the morning, Diana was ill and feverish, and unable to rise. She lay there that day and the next tossing and restless and ill. Her good father attended to her anxiously. The colonel called every day, and made most earnest and passionate inquiries after her health.

Paul Clement, pounding away in the surgery with his pestle or mortar, or sitting before a heavy book late into the night, attempting to study, was distracted, between love, bitter disappointment, and burning ambition.

Meanwhile what had become of the colonel's precious jewels? They were worth eighty thousand pounds. Were they absolutely in the possession of the hideous woman who had assaulted Diana?

And Mrs. Wilcox, what of her? She was whispering about with her evil smile in the various houses where she was welcome a story in which Diana figured discredibly, if not disgracefully. Alas! for youth and beauty in a country town when they fall under the venomous lash of the tongues of the Mrs. Wilcoxes of the community!

(To be continued.)

### DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

"I SHALL never marry, mamma—never! so you needn't say another word about it!"

Effie Clayton shook her brown curls until they tumbled all over her round white face, and stamped her little foot by way of emphasis.

"Oh, nonsense!" said her brother Tom, with a most provoking drawl.

"I mean it—every word of it!" asserted the maiden, the tears starting to her eyes. "I never saw a man that was good for anything but to be waited on. They're all selfish, exacting, peevish, irritable and deceitful—there!"

And that number two boot came down again to signify that there was no appeal from her judgment, and that the whole sex was hereby ostracized, excommunicated and annihilated.

Mrs. Clayton, who for a few moments had been silent, now looked up from her work.

"You have given your father a good character, my child," she said with quiet reproof.

"I didn't mean him, you know I didn't, mamma!" answered Effie, her lips quivering.

"And you didn't refer to your poor little brother, either, did you?" whined Tom, with a ridiculous grimace, as he moved his one hundred and seventy pounds of flesh to the other side of the lounge.

"Yes, I did!" replied his sister, spitefully.

"My son, be quiet a moment," said Mrs. Clayton, kindly.

"Certainly, my dear mother," he rejoined, a smile irradiating his handsome face.

"Effie, when I told you that Oscar Wing and his sister were coming to visit us, and that he was in every respect an estimable young man, I did so with the intention of acquainting you with his character, and not from any matchmaking desire. I love my daughter too much to attempt to get her off my hands by any small strategy. I would rather you would live alone all your life than to have you marry in haste. Why you misconstrued my words I do not know. Why you have indulged in such an unmaidenly tirade I cannot imagine, unless you have some secret grief which has embittered your feelings. That, however, is improbable, as I think you are too honest, and love me too much to deceive me."

Effie made a feint of pushing her curls back from her face, that her mother might not notice how pale she was, and how firmly her lips were compressed.

"You must remember, my child, that there are but two sexes on earth, that all our happiness and joy must come from each other; and when we decry and slander one another, we only show our own intolerance and bigotry, and turn our own weapons against ourselves," continued Mrs. Clayton. "All of us, men and women both, are fully endowed enough with human weaknesses, but one no more than the other. Instead of censuring others, be kind enough to look to your own deficiencies. I trust I shall hear no more outbreaks of this kind: they pain me very much."

It had been very hard for Effie to sit still and listen to these words, with her secret sorrow throbbing in her heart, and the consciousness of her having deceived her gentle mother preying upon her mind. As the last syllable left her mother's lips Effie arose and walked hastily from the room. The instant she reached her own chamber the tears burst from her eyes, and, sinking into a chair, she gave full vent to her grief.

"I trusted him! I loved him!" she moaned, clasping

her hands tightly together. "Oh, how I loved him! and now he has forgotten me; I know he has, for I haven't heard a word from him for a month. I ought to have told mother, I suppose, at the time of it; but Arnold was poor, and I got acquainted with him accidentally, and—and—oh, dear, I was so happy I forgot all about it!"

Another spasm of weeping, more violent than the first, then she walked the room several times, with her hands pressed to her brow; finally she dropped on her knees before her trunk, and drew out one or two bunches of letters tied with purple velvet. Having read a few tender lines in several, and cried a little over each, she hurled them back into the trunk and sprang up, her eyes blazing.

"I'll not feel sad—I'll not be gentle, amiable, and quiet! if I do I shall go mad!" she exclaimed, clenching her little fist. "I can't be like mother—oh, no, no! not now, with this disappointment eating into my heart. If she only knew—but she shan't know! I'll keep my mortification to myself; nobody shall ever know that I have been taught to love, and then laughed at and deserted!"

Her own words aroused her anger, and now her cheeks were red, her eyes gleamed, her breath came short and quick.

"I'll hate him—I'll hate all men!" she cried, striking her hands together. "I'll torment them all I can. I'll deceive every one I come across, and then mock him! scoff at him! scorn him! Oh, I'll have a glorious revenge!"

"I wonder what on earth ails Effie?" mused Tom, as he drove over the road, holding the prancing grays firmly in hand. "I never saw her quite so ill-natured before. If she wasn't so frank and honest I should certainly think she had some secret trouble. But that idea would be ridiculous even in that case. What could trouble Effie? She has all that love and money can give her, and as to her ever getting sweet on anybody—that is out of the question! I'm afraid she was cut out for an old maid. I'll put Wing up to plaguing her a little at any rate—he's just the fellow to do it!"

Tom arrived at the station just as the train came in, and, giving his horses in charge of a boy, he entered the station to look for his friends. A beautiful blonde, with the bluest eyes, the whitest teeth, and the reddest cheeks he had ever seen, attracted his attention at once.

"By Jove! isn't she lovely?" he said, half aloud.

The lady heard him, and turned away blushing crimson.

"Confound that tongue of mine! Couldn't help it though," he muttered, as he strode on. "Wonder if she's angry—wonder if she stops here?"

At that moment he felt a hand on his shoulder, and turned to meet the hearty greeting of Oscar Wing.

"I went to look after the baggage, that the reason you missed me, Tom," said Wing, still shaking his friend's hands. "My sister is about here somewhere—you haven't seen her for several years, have you? Ah! there she is. Excuse me."

"Which one?" queried Tom, whose eyes were upon the beauty that had challenged his admiration a minute before; but his friend did not hear him, and went directly toward a sorrow-looking female in a black dress, with a high hat and red feather.

"Oh, gracious! if it was only the other one," groaned Tom, driving his hands into his pocket and dropping his chin on his chest.

"My sister Fleta, Mr. Clayton."

Tom looked up, expecting to see the sharp-nosed feminine with the sugar-loaf hat, but instead he met the gaze of those luminous blue eyes, and saw that sweet, beautiful face upraised to his. But only for an instant; then the lady blushed and averted her head, and Tom stood like a statue, his hat lifted, his face the colour of a peony, and his eyes and mouth dilated with surprise.

Oscar Wing stroked his long black beard, and glanced from one to the other inquiringly.

"I—really—I—I'm sure I beg your pardon, Miss Wing. I—I—confound it! I've the most unruly tongue in the world—"

"It's a novelty to find a man that has a tongue," replied Fleta, in a silvery voice.

"Sarcastic, witty, and all that," thought Tom. "Gracious! I hope she isn't a poetess!" and added aloud:

"And stranger still to find one that speaks the truth involuntarily, is it not?"

"Even when that truth is impertinent," she replied, coldly.

"I'm frozen now," said Tom, with a grimace as he led the way to the carriage.

Fleta put her hand up to conceal the smile that his words called to her face in spite of herself. He was so thoroughly good-natured, so comical without verging at all upon buffoonery that it was impossible to dislike him.

"But he's conceited," she said to herself as if in excuse for the slight interest she had manifested.

Oscar sat on the front seat with Tom, and as the carriage was a landau Fleta had the inside wholly to herself.

"I'm very anxious to see your sister, Tom," said Oscar as they bowed merrily along the level road.

"Are you a reformer?" queried Tom, in reply.

"No," was the wondering answer.

"She'll make a target of you then, and blaze away at you with Labour Reform speeches, Woman's Rights, and all the isms. Oh, I pity you, my unfortunate friend!"

"I'll soon teach her better. You've been opposing her too much and aroused her combativeness. I understand how to approach and capture the feminine mind."

"Hear him, Miss Wing!" shouted Tom, with a laugh.

"Just like all you men," replied Fleta, languidly.

The jolly fellow shrugged his shoulders and called out to his horses, who answered his voice with speed redoubled.

"But there's another obstacle, Oscar, resumed Tom, with great solemnity. "Effie is a man-hater!"

"Pooh! All girls affect that more or less—it is only to draw attention, isn't it, Fleta?"

"Can any poor words of mine serve to strengthen your infinite wisdom?" said his sister, with caustic irony.

Tom gave his friend a nudge in the side as much as to say: "You're done for, old fellow." But Oscar smiled quietly to himself and stroked his glossy beard.

Reaching the house, the guests were warmly welcomed by Mr. Clayton and his wife. Effie did not show herself until tea-time and then she was very still and reserved. After the introductions were over she said nothing to Mr. Wing, and only spoke two or three times to Fleta. Oscar resolved to pay her in her own coin, and gave his whole attention to Mrs. Clayton, while Tom did his best to establish himself in Fleta's good graces. In the evening music was resorted to, and upon being asked to play Effie went straight in silence to the piano and performed a dirge as doleful as death itself. Mrs. Clayton's face flushed with mortification, and Tom frowned savagely. Was the girl crazy? But neither Mr. Wing nor his sister seemed to notice it, for the latter came to the relief at once with a brilliant waltz, and then sang a beautiful ballad, sang it with such pathos that Tom felt his heart slipping from his control.

"Shall you deem me impertinent if I tell you how much good your singing does me?" he asked, lowly.

"Very likely; you'd better not take the risk," was the curt reply.

"What ails all the girls?" thought Tom, scowling. "They snap like turtles and show their teeth like wolves."

Three days passed. Effie maintained her fretfulness in spite of all protestations, but it wasn't as amusing to her as it was at first. Oscar avoided her altogether, and when forced to be in her presence he seemed ill at ease. This wasn't comforting to her vanity. She was not aware that she was frightful—in fact, she had thought once or twice that she was rather pretty. Why then should he run away from her? Of course she didn't care, but then—well, it is more pleasant to attract people than to repel them, even if one is a man-hater. While thus reflecting she was sitting in an arbour in the garden, with a book in her lap. Suddenly Oscar came in at the other door and threw himself upon the seat without seeing her. She moved slightly, and attracted his attention—and he jumped up as if he had been shot. Casting a timid glance toward her, he slid out the door, and then putting his head back for an instant, said, hesitatingly:

"I beg your pardon, I didn't know you were here."

"That's the way he always acts," mused Effie, tossing her curls with vexation. "He seems afraid of me, and looks at me as if I were a tigress. Oh, what horrid things men are!"

An hour later she met Oscar again in the music room. He was sitting at the piano when she entered, but the instant he saw her he clutched his hat and made a dive for the door.

"Mr. Wing!" she exclaimed, stamping her foot.

"Oh—yes—certainly—your servant, Miss Clayton!" he stammered, pausing, and fidgeting his hat nervously.

"What does he think of me?" reflected Effie. "I'll keep on in the same way though," and she added sternly: "Sit down to that instrument if you please."

He complied, with the air of a henpecked husband.

"Now play."

He played tremulously as one about to be dragged to the gallows.

"That will do. Now tell me why you avoid me, why do you look at me as if you expected me to do or say some dreadful thing? Am I a repulsive object? Do I look like a tigress? Are you afraid that I'll scratch your face, pull your hair out, or bite you?"

"N—no, not exactly."

"What then are you afraid of?"

"Won't you sco—could I tell you?" he queried, with an apprehensive, mysterious air.

"No, go on!"

"Well, then, I was afraid you would come—come down on me with your Woman Suffrage speeches, your Labour Reform lectures, your essays on the depravity of man—"

"Mr. Wing, is this insult to my womanhood intentional?"

"Insult? Oh, gracious! I thought you revelled in these isms—I did, upon my word."

"It shows your penetration! You could not have hurled a greater affront upon me if you had struck me in my face! I never thought I was masculine in look or manner—"

"You're not—you're not! Ten thousand pardons, Miss Clayton! I've been deceived! Oh, thatascal Tom—I'd like to pound him!"

At that instant Tom and Flota appeared at the entrance, and, noting the situation, burst out laughing. Effie's face grew redder, her eyes flashed with indignation, and yet she stood in an accusing attitude before Oscar!

He, surprised by the sudden arrival of the others, looked sheepish, and still retaining his posture of dismay, glanced with increasing embarrassment from one to the other.

"He knows how to approach and capture the feminine mind!" bawled Tom, slapping his sides.

"He looks so much like a conqueror too!" added Flota, shaking her golden head with laughter.

And then they laughed in chorus, and pointed to Effie and Oscar, and giggled at each other and clapped their hands until their victims blushed and trembled with vexation.

"You're a pair of ninnies!" cried Effie, spitefully, and rushed by them into the library.

"I'll play a trick on you, confound you!" muttered Oscar, flinging his hat across the room and shaking his fist as he dropped into a chair. "Had lots of fun, haven't you?—kisses you, don't it?—clever, aren't you?"

And the only answer he received was peal on peal of silvery laughter, mingling with Tom's provoking taunts. Exasperated at last, Oscar flung up a window, and leaped out into the garden. Then his tormentors sat down to reconsider the joke, and comment upon it.

"I think Tom is very mean—I never believed he would tell such a story about me!" sobbed Effie, leaning her head upon the library desk. "He made Oscar think I was a terrible creature, a coarse, brawling woman—and Oscar was really afraid of me—afraid I would lecture him—oh, this is too bad! What made Tom do it? I won't forgive him—I won't speak to him! Of course I don't care anything for Oscar! I shall never love anybody but Arnold! Still, one does not like to be thought a vixen or a screecher!"

Three days more went by. Effie was with Oscar a good deal, and had very little to say to Flota, and less to Tom. It troubled that couple very little, however, for they seemed very much interested in each other, and took the indifference of their companions with the best good nature. Mr. and Mrs. Clayton made no comments, nor even let the young people know that they noticed their extraordinary demeanour.

Flota's azure eyes, Flota's charming smile, Flota's musical voice, had completely upset poor Tom's heart. His merriment was almost lost in anxiety; his eyes were cast downward reflectively most of the time, and he found himself sighing. Time after time he had sought to introduce the subject, to acquaint Flota with his feelings, but she eluded him on each occasion. Apparently interested, she would listen until he grew very pathetic, and then, with a toss of her golden tresses, and a roguish glance, she would break into a loud laugh.

"Hang it! it's all very fine to have your wit applauded, but when a woman laughs at everything a fellow says it makes him feel like an idiot!" reflected Tom, with some chagrin.

The next day, as Tom and Flota were walking toward the old oak grove in the forest, a favourite afternoon resort of theirs, Effie, with a strange gentleman, appeared in a cross-path, and pausing a moment, exchanged a few hurried words.

"Oh, Arnold, there they are! They must not see you!" whispered Effie, anxiously.

"Fear nothing, my darling!" was the warm reply. "Trust all to me."

In the meantime Tom and Flota had entered the grove, and she had already begun to weave a wreath for his hat. Leaning against a tree, he contemplated her with something like veneration. How still and quiet she was, and as he revolved the fact in his mind, a new view of it was presented to him, and he remembered that she had said but little on their walk. As he looked at her now she seemed sad. He would know if anything troubled her, and, bending down, he rallied her on her silence.

"I have no desire to talk," she said, gloomily, and bent closer over the leaves in her lap.

"Then you will listen to me, won't you?"

"Perhaps."

"How shall I begin?" he thought. "I never saw her in this mood before. It's a cross between a sigh and a cry. Well, here goes!"

He kicked the leaves about a second or two, whistled a bar or two of a favourite opera, and then pushed his hat back with an air of resignation.

"Flota, you have keen perceptions; you must have seen that I love you—that you are dearer to me than—"

"Than Nellie Waite, perhaps?" she interrupted, flashing a glance of reproach upon him.

"What at on earth are you driving at?" queried Tom, in amazement.

"I thought you were honourable?"

"And so I am!"

"Stop—do not interrupt me again!" she exclaimed, her blue eyes gleaming, her bosom throbbing convulsively. "I will not listen to your protestations; once they would have been pleasant to me, but that is past—"

"Flota, Flota, why is this? What have I done?"

"Can you ask? Oh, what is the need of heaping deceit on deceit? Enough! I do not wish to see your face—to hear your voice! Let me go!"

She arose, tossed away the wreath, and started toward the path. Tom, white as a ghost, and trembling lest he should lose her, placed himself in her way.

"You shall not go—you love me. By Heaven, you must not, shall not part thus—"

"Unhand me! You are no gentleman!"

She struggled to get away, but Tom threw his arm around her, and held her firm, while she reproached him most bitterly. Just then Effie and the stranger appeared on the scene, and commenced to wink and nod to each other, to the great provocation of our friend Tom.

"Who are you, sir? How dare you intrude?"

But the only reply was a chorus of laughter from the two, and a great whispering and tittering, and many gestures indicative of extreme amusement. Effie clapped her hands, and swung her hat, her companion "haw-haw-ed," and slapped his sides, and all the time Tom and Flota remained in statu quo, looking very uncomfortable. At length Tom lost his patience, and sprang angrily upon the stranger. Effie threw herself between them, and placed her arm around her friend's neck.

"Stop, Tom! Arnold is mine—do you hear, mine?"

"I told you I'd play a trick on you, and I have—on you all!" said Oscar Arnold Wing, quietly.

Effie started back in mingled wonder and incredulity.

"You are not Oscar?" she gasped.

"Yes, I am," he laughed. "See my sister stare—even she does not know me! I had not seen her for three years. I had not seen Tom for four. I put on these big whiskers—she thought them genuine, I suppose—so did Tom, but Effie—"

"Knew her Arnold the instant she saw him this morning, but never dreamed he was Oscar!" exclaimed the maiden, clasping his hand.

"I say, Flota, we've been sold! Oscar has beaten us at our own game."

Flota turned away contemptuously; she would not vouchsafe an answer.

"Don't be cross, sis," interposed Oscar. "I wrote you that letter, accusing Tom of being in love with the village beauty, Nellie Waite! It's all fancy—you'd better make up."

Tom extended his hand yearningly, and Flota took it blushing.

"But how did you know Effie, Oscar?"

"I won her heart, last June, in my natural guise, but under the assumed name of Arnold West. I wished to have the hand awaiting me when Flota and I should come down."

"And I became a man-hater, because I thought Arnold had forgotten me," added Effie, artlessly.

The happy quartette returned to the house, and explained the affair to Mr. and Mrs. Clayton, who enjoyed it thoroughly. Two months later, a double marriage was celebrated.

G. W. S.

The new Alexandra Palace is rapidly approaching completion, and it will be entirely rebuilt by the

middle of June, when it is to be opened with great ceremony.

## MABEL'S LOVER.

"Never marry a poor man, my dear," said Mrs. Chesley, leaning back in her velvet-covered chair, and brushing an imaginary speck from her elegant purple silk with the tip of her fan. "I never should have to give Eleanor such advice as this were she to live a hundred years, but you are so sentimental. Look around you and note the magnificence of our home—it is in keeping with our refined tastes! Ah, me! the air of poverty is stifling!—it poisons the nature that breathes it! Imagine yourself attired in a calico dress! It is positively horrifying, my dear. I hope the contrast I have suggested to you will cure you of your foolish penchant for Louis Marston."

Mrs. Chesley sighed wearily, and pushed a straggling curl from her powdered brow.

"I must love the man that I marry!" said Mabel, quietly.

"Love again!" exclaimed Mrs. Chesley, frostily.

"Can you eat love or drink it? How absurd!"

"Then love is nonsense, mother?"

"The rankest nonsense, my dear."

"Didn't you love my father?"

"You are impertinent, miss!" retorted Mrs. Chesley, swinging her fan vigorously.

Mabel laughed merrily.

"It is a fair question, mother."

"It is none of your business—none of your business, miss, at all!" replied the fashionable matron, looking very much offended. "Things have come to a fine pass when daughters catechise their mothers in this style! I should think you would hide your head with shame!"

And drawing a bit of lace from her pocket about two inches square, Mrs. Chesley assumed a woe-begone look and prepared to cry. As this manoeuvre was always in order when every other argument failed, it made no impression upon Mabel, so rising, she left the room. For a moment or two Mrs. Chesley held the handkerchief to her eyes, and then finding she was to have no audience she restored the article to her pocket and eased her mind by uttering a few complaints and emitting a series of moans. The echoes of her querulous voice had hardly died away ere a servant entered and announced a visitor.

"Who is it?" said the lady, sharply.

"He wouldn't give a card or name, madam. He appears to be an extremely singular personage, begging your pardon," replied the garrulous servant. "He says he wished to see you on very important business."

"Business!" repeated Mrs. Chesley, throwing up her hands. "As if I knew anything about business! Well, let him come in! I wonder what'll happen next."

The attendant vanished, and a moment later a scabbily attired individual appeared in the doorway, and bowing obsequiously, advanced into the room. Presenting a card to Mrs. Chesley, he executed another flourish, and then removed his eyeglasses from his nose and proceeded to wipe them with great deliberation.

"I trust I have the honour of seeing you well, madam," he observed, while his lips parted in an urbane smile, and his swarthy black eyes seemed to retreat into his head.

"Philomont Peck," roused the lady, glancing at the card, and added coldly, "You are a stranger to me, sir. Be kind enough to state your business."

"Excuse me if I take a chair," he replied, with insolent complaisance, and continued, with another grin as he tipped back at his ease: "It is more than likely, madam, that you have heard your lamented husband speak of me."

"No, sir, I never did!" interposed Mrs. Chesley, with chilling dignity. "You will oblige me by stating your errand at once and briefly."

"It is in connection with your estate."

"Then go to the executor!" interrupted the lady, rising.

Mr. Philomont Peck arose too, and began rubbing his hand, and bobbing his head, while a subtle light shone from his bead-like eyes.

"Bear me with a moment, my dear madam, and I will show you that it is both for your interest and mine to keep this matter to ourselves."

Indignation flashed in Mrs. Chesley's eyes, and burned in her cheeks.

"As if your—your interest and mine could be coupled!" she exclaimed, in a tone of withering contempt. "I will not endure such insolence! Leave my house, sir."

"The elegant Mrs. Chesley forgets herself, I am sure!" replied Philomont, placing his hand over his



heart and bowing low. "Much as I regret having offended you, I cannot pass this matter over lightly." "I'll ring for the servants if you do not go at once."

"First, my dear madam, let me ask if you know that Archibald Chesley was married before he ever saw you?"

The lady paused involuntarily. Amusement held her speechless.

"And that the first wife is still alive?" continued Mr. Philemon Peck, with an exulting grin.

Mrs. Chesley sank into her chair, and tried to lull the fears that chased each other through her brain. Could it be true? In a moment her reason arose above her imagination, and with a scornful smile she answered:

"You are either a lunatic or a villain, to come to me with such foolish stories. I will have charity and believe you the former. Now go!" and she pointed toward the door.

"Shall I tell the world that the fashionable Mrs. Chesley has no right to the name, that she is using money which does not belong to her, that—pardon the words—but they are the words of the law—her two lovely daughters are illegitimate? Madam, this would be a most humiliating disclosure. I would save you from it, believe me."

Mrs. Chesley turned deathly pale, and gasped for breath. The very intensity of her rage forbade speech for at least three minutes, and during that time Philemon stood before her in a humble attitude, his eyes fixed upon her in pity. Tears came to her relief at last, and her overstrained nerves relaxed.

"Such insults! such outrageous insults!" she cried, her very fingers trembling. "How dare you speak so of my beloved husband? How dare you hurl your vile insinuations at me and my daughters? And all this in my own house? Must I bear it? Oh, you hideous wretch! I will not—indeed, I will not! It is all false—a foul conspiracy!" articulated Mrs. Chesley, dropping into the vacant chair.

"Madame does injustice to her good breeding—but her feelings control her—it is pardonable," said Mr. Peck, with a grand flourish. "Let me recapitulate the points, just to show where she stands. In 1835, Archibald Chesley, then twenty-three years of age, married Sarah Upton, of Epping. We can prove this by Sarah herself, by the son of the clergyman, who saw his father marry them, and by the parish records. Nearly two years later, in 1837, Mr. Chesley left his wife, and went to London. In 1839 he made your acquaintance; a few months later he heard of his wife's death, and in 1840 he married you. The story of Sarah Chesley having died was false, and now, after twenty-five years of hardship and battle with the world, she comes to claim her legal rights. This is the outline of the case. Will madam tell me what she will do to save her own name and her daughters?"

"What can I do?" ejaculated the unhappy woman, bursting into tears.

"The claimant sympathizes with you; she does not wish to distress you," rejoined Mr. Philemon Peck, patronizingly. "In fact, she will bind herself to hold the affair a dead secret, and give you a release of all claims, if you will give her eight thousand pounds—just half of what she can legally recover."

Mrs. Chesley looked up quickly. A proposition for settlement, coming from parties who held so much proof, made it seem as if they doubted their own case. In spite of the convincing array of facts to which the lawyer had called her attention, the lady grew suspicious again.

"I will see my solicitors, and obtain their opinion," she said, meditatively.

"In that event, I am instructed to begin a suit at once," replied Mr. Peck. "In three days the affair will be common talk; your daughters will be pointed at with scorn, and you will be shunned—"

"Spare me—spare me!" moaned Mrs. Chesley, as the horrible picture again arose before her mental vision. "I cannot bear that—I cannot! Oh, why have I lived to see this day?"

Suddenly realizing that she was humbling herself before a stranger, who made a strenuous effort to conceal her emotion, and said, with some spirit:

"Where has this woman been these twenty-five years? Why has she not come forward until this late hour?"

"In answering your first question, my dear madam, you cause me to pain you unnecessarily. For a period of years your husband paid her an annuity to keep away, she having revealed her existence to him a short time after he married you; after this she went abroad, and he heard nothing from her afterward. She lately returned, and hearing of Mr. Chesley's death, came to me to take her case."

"It grows deeper—it is a terrible blow to me. Tell me your terms again," said Mrs. Chesley, leaving her throbbing head upon her hand.

"Eight thousand pounds to be paid within two weeks, and the hand of your daughter Eleanor in marriage to the man whom the first Mrs. Chesley shall select. That he shall be an honourable gentleman, she will guarantee."

"This is fiendish! You may destroy my name, rifle me of all my goods, but never—never will I sell my own flesh and blood! Go—tell this to your vile employer, and leave me alone in my misery!"

She rose up grandly, her face aglow with a noble resolution, her eyes gleaming like fire. An instant she stood motionless, and then gathering her robes about her, she swept majestically from the room.

"One move too many—I trespassed too far on my success," mused Mr. Peck, screwing up one eye and pulling at his whiskers. "But I hold the winning card, and I'll play it yet."

With this he quitted the room and house. As he walked down the broad path, on each side of which beautiful flowers bloomed, he heard a chorus of sweet, girlish laughter, and abruptly turned aside into the path that led to the river. Passing by two or three servants who were spending a leisure hour in the grounds, Mr. Peck approached the stone steps that led to the silvery flowing stream. Mabel, looking surpassingly beautiful in her jaunty river costume, was standing on the second step, resting gracefully on an ear, while her twin sister, Eleanor, sat in the stern of the boat waiting for Mabel to embark. Mr. Philemon Peck gazed upon the two beauties with admiration, and said, very ardently:

"Miss Mabel, please tell your mother that Mr. Peck will call again on Thursday."

Then lifting his hat, he walked away with an oscillating gait indicative of the extreme.

"He is some crazy man," said Mabel, merrily, as she stepped into the boat. "I wonder how he knew my name."

"I haven't the slightest idea, neither do I care," replied Eleanor, coldly.

"You don't say so," laughed Mabel. "Be careful now, or the weight of your dignity will tip the boat over. Sit still, while I cast off. There, my sovereign, does that suit you? It's real jolly to be in the Royal Navy."

And with a sweet carol Mabel dropped into her seat, bent to her oars with grace and skill, and sent the delicate craft flying over the waters like a swan. Every moment some mirthful or witty remark left her lips, and at last Eleanor was forced to laugh, in spite of herself.

Al! how differently they would have felt could they have known how their mother's heart was oppressed.

Arriving at length opposite a mansion somewhat similar to their own, they disembarked, moored the boat, and hurried up to the house. Here they were met by a bevy of young girls, all chattering like magpies, and laughing between every word.

"Louis is here, Belle," whispered one in Mabel's ear.

"Is he?" said the maiden, a crimson flush mantling each cheek.

The next instant Louis Marston came out upon the verandah, and the girls began making mysterious signs to each other as he advanced and greeted Mabel. He was a tall, lithe, muscular fellow, with a frank, honest face, a piercing gray eye, and curly brown hair.

Everybody liked him. Somehow he and Mabel became separated from the group, and wandered down by the river; strangely enough, neither had much to say, though there were volumes of unspoken words in their eyes.

"You find me excellent company to-day, don't you, Mabel?" he said, at last.

"Oh, as good as usual," she replied, sarcastically.

"Thank you." He paused suddenly and drew a long breath. "It is useless for me to exist in this way, it is dangerous in one's happiness to trust too much to hope. Mabel, I love you."

His gray eyes were full of tender supplication, his white face and quivering lips showed the depth of his emotion.

A thrill went through the girl's heart, her very being responded to those earnest, simple words. She dared not look up; it seemed as if he knew her feelings, and the thought sent wave after wave of carnine from her white throat to her golden hair. Anon he took her hand and held it gently within his own, speaking again, in a low, intense voice:

"My darling, can you love me?"

"Yes, Louis," came the soft whisper, and her hand in his trembled.

Simultaneously they raised their eyes, and soul spoke to soul from out their glowing windows. The silence was intoxicating—their hearts beat with ecstasy—all nature seemed beautiful and glorified. The sweet moment passed, as all must, and a thought of the obstacles in their path flew in upon Mabel's mind.

"What troubles you, dearest?"

"I was thinking of mother's opposition to our union," she answered sighing.

"We shall find some way to overcome that. I will go home with you and see her."

They returned to the house, and shortly afterwards embarked in the skiff, Louis handling the oars, and Mabel taking the tiller-ropes, while Eleanor, icily indifferent, sat in the bows. Reaching the Chesley mansion, they moored the boat, and at once entered the house. They found Mrs. Chesley looking pale and troubled. Courteously Louis made known the object of his visit.

"Are you willing to incur the risk of disgrace, Mr. Marston?" was Mrs. Chesley's strange reply.

"Nothing can lessen my love for Mabel," he answered. "I do not understand you, but I know that most or thought of hers can ever bring a blush to her cheek or mine. If she has trouble, I am willing to share it with her, and protect—"

"Then take her!" And Mrs. Chesley burst into tears, and worked her hands nervously together.

Mabel gazed upon her mother in mingled sadness and astonishment. What meant this singular manner? What cause had she to weep? Just then a thought of the stranger they had seen on the landing crossed Mabel's mind, and she suggested his message to her mother.

"So he is coming again," said Mrs. Chesley, in a heavy, listless way, "coming to torture me with the consequences of a crime that I cannot be guilty of! Oh my husband! my husband! how could you deceive me so?" She passed her hands across her brow, a wild light shone from her eyes. "He didn't do it—he didn't! it's false! I would sell Eleanor—"

"Oh, Heaven! what is this? Mother, tell me, tell Louis! We will help you!"

Mrs. Chesley had dwelt on the harrowing topic until her nerves were terribly overstrained. But the word "help," coming from Mabel's lips gave her a gleam of hope, and turning quickly to Louis, she said, with childish eagerness:

"You are a lawyer. You will help me, won't you?"

"With all my heart, dear mother," rejoined Louis.

Mr. Philemon Peck, elated at the idea of obtaining a magnificent fee, called upon Mrs. Chesley on Thursday, and stated in his grandiloquent way that after arguing his client to miller terms, she had consented to accept five thousand pounds in liquidation of her claims. Mrs. Chesley was greatly troubled, and begged a few days for consideration. Mr. Peck would postpone the matter no longer. If the lady wished to settle, it must be settled virtually now. After a few moments' thought, Mrs. Chesley said that if Mr. Peck and his client would call on Monday forenoon, she would give the lady a cheque for the amount. Mr. Philemon Peck complimented Mrs. Chesley on her wisdom in choosing the lesser evil, and left her in high spirits.

Monday came promptly as usual, and at ten o'clock Mr. Philemon Peck and his client—a rather short stout woman arrived. The cheque was signed and handed over, and Mr. Peck and his client were about to depart when Mr. Marston stepped forward and proposed to give his version of the affair.

"I object to anything of the kind," interposed Mr. Peck, excitedly. "The affair is all settled, and to the best advantage. It is none of your business, at all, sir."

"We shall see," replied Louis, quietly. "You are right in saying that Archibald Chesley married Sarah Upton at Epping on the fifteenth of September, 1835; you are right as to the fact of his leaving her, too, in 1837; but instead of his going to London he went to Africa, and lived in Cape Town until 1843, when he was killed by being crushed under a log. The men who were working with him at the time, the man who dug his grave and lowered him into it are in this house. There happened to be two Archibald Chesleys in the world, Mr. Philemon Peck, and your game is up."

Philemon turned all colours, gasped for breath, and made a rush for the door, where he was caught by a constable and securely held. The false Mrs. Chesley darted for the window, jumped out with remarkable agility, and landed in the arms of an officer, who was stationed there to meet just such a contingency as this.

"You have done a noble week's work, my dear Louis," said Mrs. Chesley, grasping his hand. "Had it not been for your efforts I should have been robbed, for I could not visit my own solicitors. I am proud of you."

Need it be told that Mabel and Louis are all in all to each other in their double life? Philemon and his client were thoroughly frightened and then released, as Mrs. Chesley did not wish to appear in a criminal court as prosecutor.

W. G. E.



[THE PORTRAIT.]

## LENA'S TEMPTATION.

INTO the coziest and prettiest of breakfast-rooms stole the bright rays of the October sun. There were beautiful pictures upon the walls; choice flowers in graceful vases; and the breakfast-table, with its rich array of china and silver, was itself the perfect picture which the artistic housewife knows how to evoke from chaos. But not a face amid the group gathered there but wore a shade of care and annoyance. The father, leaning back in his chair, toyed nervously with his teaspoon; the mother, a slender, delicate lady, with pensive face and gentle brown eyes, now dim with tears, pushed aside the hardly-tasted food, and passing to the window, stood lost in thought; while the daughter, the cause, as usual, of the family trouble, tapped the carpet impatiently with her daintily-slipped foot.

"Indeed, I must have it, papa!" she exclaimed, drawing a wordy argument to a close; and Mr. Lyell, succumbing at last to the inevitable, drew a plerotic purse from his pocket, and placed a roll of notes in the tiny outstretched hand; when, with a kiss on his furrowed brow, and a gay song rising to her lips, Lena danced out of the room.

As the echo of her footsteps died away, the mother crossed to her husband's side, and smoothing the gray hair back from his brow, said, tremulously:

"I am sorry you yielded, Robert, for it will only encourage Lena in new extravagances. It seems to me that she grows more wilful, more selfish and heartless, every day. I used to think, when we were poor, that rich people did not know the meaning of sorrow; but the fortune I so coveted has proved a curse instead of a blessing; and this sad morning, it really seems to me that I would gladly exchange it for the peace and quiet happiness that were ours in those early days. Heaven answers our prayers sometimes, I think, to show us how little we know our own wants."

"You must not give up so, Lucia," said the husband's calmer voice. "Lena is wild and thoughtless, but she is young; and we will hope for better things. With such a true, wise mother, I cannot despair of her reformation; and He who led us in the day of adversity will not, I know, forsake us in our time of worldly prosperity."

Meanwhile Lena stood in her own room before the mirror, trying the effect of various ribbons that lay near; but whether the setting was of rose or violet or snow, the beautiful picture framed therein remained unchanged. It was a lovely face that the mirror reflected, and though a proud, cold look was dawning in the once gentle eyes and hard, defiant lines settling around the once yielding mouth, the vivid colouring and perfect outline made it a face once seen to be for ever kept in memory, a face full of strength and power. Left to her own resources Lena Lyell would have fought bravely the battle of life—would have proved the strength and support of the weaker natures dependent upon her. But the nature that would have come forth unscathed from the fires of adversity had not been able to withstand the glow of prosperity; and living a useless, aimless life, with no higher ambition than to outshine her gay companions in the gorgeousness of her apparel, or the acquisition of some new baubles, she was growing daily cold and proud and unwomanly.

Once, indeed, in the months drifting rapidly by, a change had come over her life. The touch of a master hand, the glance of a dark eye, the persuasive accent of a loved voice, had awakened new aims and ambitions in her worldly heart—had given her faint glimpses of a possible Eden. But Gordon Grey had passed on his way, and forgotten her, and in the effort to shake off the memories whose tuneless vibrations maddened her Lena had plunged still deeper into the engulfing maelstrom of fashionable life.

A few hours later, robed in rich attire, she swept down the street on her way to the jeweller's. In

the little country town which was her home there was not her equal for beauty of face or grace of form—a fact of which she was proudly conscious; and the looks of admiration that greeted her from the passers-by were delicious food to her vanity, which was becoming the controlling power of her nature. Passing a lonely residence, in a retired street, her attention was arrested by a rap on the window-pane; and the sweet face of Gordon Grey's sister, Mrs. Alton, an old-time friend and school-mate, looked out from its framework of vines.

"Can't you come in a moment, Lena dear? I have something to show you," she called; and running lightly up the steps, Lena soon found herself in the pleasant parlour, endeared to her by so many happy memories of the past.

A new painting hung upon the wall, and to this Mrs. Alton directed her friend's attention. It was a simple forest scene. In the foreground a dead deer lay upon the greensward, with a tired hound resting by his side; overhead a scarlet maple tossed its gorgeous banner on the air; and a little beyond a monarch oak, just touched with gold by the fairy, Frost, reared its regal head; on the right a blue river wound its way among the hills; over all hung the soft, tender haze of an October noontide. A simple picture in its way, but, in the depth of colouring, and exquisite grace of the figures in the foreground, holding out a promise of other things.

"It is beautiful," said Lena, with a long-drawn breath of admiration. "Who is the artist?"

"It is the work of one of our townswomen, and it is her story I wish to tell you. Take this easy-chair by the window," and wheeling forward a cushioned seat, Mrs. Alton placed herself by her friend's side, while baby Howard, picking up a letter, which had fallen from the table, amused himself by pulling it to pieces.

"Do you remember the head clerk at Belmont's?" began Mrs. Alton, "the one with the scholarly face and the dreamy, artist eye? A few years since he was a leading merchant in one of our large cities. Through the treachery of a friend, in whose honour he had confided, he became a bankrupt, and was forced at last to accept the situation he holds at present. Of his five daughters, delicately reared and fashionably educated, only one, the youngest, could do anything to assist herself or lessen the family burden, while the mother, completely prostrated by the loss of fortune, became a helpless invalid. But my little heroine has proved herself equal to every emergency. Housekeeper, seamstress, nurse, all in one, she has the priceless faculty of making the most of their small income.

"A friend of mine, while examining some of her paintings, praised her talent, and suggested that she might dispose of them at good prices. Acting upon this hint, she has offered some of the best for sale, but has met with very little encouragement, notwithstanding the undoubted merit of her productions. She is anxious, now, to raise funds which may enable her to spend the winter in London, taking lessons of a master. Lilla's experience, as teacher of a small class in drawing, has shown her how superficial her education has been, and she wishes to cultivate her talent; but unless she receives help from some friend, I fear she will not succeed. While Lloyd is so embarrassed," and a shadow flitted across the speaker's face, "I cannot conscientiously do much to assist her from my own purse; but I hope to interest some friend in her case," and Mrs. Alton paused, while her eyes sought her friend's face wistfully.

Lena, throwing off a momentary feeling of embarrassment, answered:

"I am sure I should be glad to assist her, Nellie, if it were in my power; but we have already more paintings than I can find room for, and it does cost me so much to dress now-a-days. Why, only this morning, papa was lecturing me on what he was pleased to call my extravagance, because I wanted that lovely bracelet at Ball's. Such a beauty! And not another in town like it. I am sure I don't have as much as most girls with our means; and what the use of living, I should like to know, if one cannot dress as other people do?"

Lena rose to her feet and drawing on her gloves, said:

"Can I be of any farther service to you, Miss Alton?"

"Will you have the kindness to match this saphyr for me at Brett's? It's for Lloyd's birthday present, and baby isn't feeling well, and I dislike to leave him this afternoon."

Rescuing a torn bit of paper from baby Howard's fingers, she wrapped it around the fleecy scarf of wool, and placed in her friend's hand.

"By the way, Lena," she said, stooping to pick up the baby to conceal her embarrassment, "I had a letter from Gordon a short time since."

A sudden flush swept into Lena's face, and in a



voice which she strove in vain to make careless and unconcerned she said:

"He is well, I hope."

"Yes; and thinks of going abroad. His firm greatly desire that he should become the resident partner in Paris. He has nothing to keep him at home excepting myself and Lloyd, and we shall try not to be selfish in a matter so greatly to his advantage."

Five minutes later Lena was on her way down the street. Mrs. Alton, watching her, whispered to herself, while a look of deep interest settled on her face:

"Gordon was right. She is thoroughly selfish and heartless, and not worthy of him. I must give up my pretty dream. Lloyd says that match-making is one of my failings."

Meanwhile Lena passed on her way, unconscious that on this perfect day of all the year nature had turned spendthrift, and with reckless hand was flinging her wealth of beauty on wood and plain. The earth was robed in glory, but Lena, walking like one in a dream, was conscious only of the old, old heart-ache; the keen pain so long battled with rose in its might and threatened to overcome her.

He was going away! The faint hope which had sustained her these weary months was utterly quenched. He had never cared for her, she whispered, bitterly, and there was nothing left for her but the same weary, aimless, intolerable life she had endured so long. She had deceived herself in these bright, brief days, for ever so by. It was only a friend's glance that had met hers, only a friend's brave, helpful words that had given her such hope and courage; and in return she had given all the wealth of a young heart's first love. Clapping her hands in sudden agony, the slip of paper fell from her trembling fingers. As she stooped to regain it her glance fell upon her own name, written in a handwriting she knew but too well; and, without stopping to think, she unfolded the paper and read as follows:

"I do love her, Nellie, as I never expect to love again; but I dare not trust my life's happiness in the hands of one so utterly frivolous and selfish—I had almost said heartless. It gives me keen pain to write this, but the truth stands before me, and I must face it and bear it. There has been a time when I thought she might prove different—that the slumbering better nature in her soul would waken to new life; but the experience of the past year has proved my hopes false. On every hand I hear of her vanity and folly, her selfishness and hard-heartedness. I am going away! and in the new life opening before me, I shall try to drive the memory of Lena Lyell from my mind."

Pleasant words for a loving, sensitive heart to scan! But in extreme cases harsh remedies are needed, and Nellie Alton never did a wiser deed than when, unwittingly, she placed that slip of torn paper in her friend's hand.

After the first glow of indignation had subsided, Lena was conscious of a faint thrill of joy mingling with the keen pain Gordon Gray's words had caused. He had cared for her then, after all; it was her own hand that had dashed the cup of joy from her lips. If she had only been true to herself, how much pain she might have been spared; and the old child-like came back into Lena's face; and the tears rose in her eyes as she prayed silently:

"Heaven forgive me! and help me to be a better woman!"

The coveted bracelet had lost its charm. She was in no mood for trifles. Turning down a side street, she walked on and on, beneath the wind-stirred trees, until the slanting rays of the afternoon sun roused her from her reverie. She was on the outskirts of the village, and right before her stood a little house, gray and unpainted, at whose window a young girl sat before her easel.

Mrs. Alton's description had been so vivid that Lena had no difficulty in recognizing in the young artist the heroine of her friend's story. Opportunities for doing good had passed by her one by one unimproved in the olden days; here was one, and she would not neglect; and in a moment more she was introducing herself to the young artist, and, all her old-time pride forgotten, chatting with her like an old friend, winning her confidence and devising means to assist her without wounding her pride.

There was an irresistible charm about Lilla Burton's manner. She was so thoroughly in earnest in the pursuit of her life-work, so wrapped up in the interests of the dear ones for whose sake she laboured, that Lena became deeply interested in her, and when she at last took her departure, the roll of notes was transferred to the artist's hand, and Lena became the happy possessor of one of her finest paintings.

Walking home in the late afternoon Lena was conscious of a strange sense of self-satisfaction and almost contentment. For the first time in years she had experienced the joy of making another happy, and the good work so begun she had no intention of leaving unfinished. Before she retired for the night she had written a long letter to an aunt in town.

whose kind interest she felt determined to awaken in behalf of her protégée.

A reply soon came.

Aunt Ruth would be glad of a companion, and would do all in her power to assist the young artist; and so it came about that when the first snows fell Lilla Burton became an inmate of Mrs. Crane's home, and began to apply herself with untiring assiduity to her loved art.

As for Lena, once having tasted the sweets of doing good, she had no mind to go back to the old selfish life. On the right hand and on the left she found those who needed her help, her sympathy and advice; and becoming interested in her work, the old pain and heartache lost some of its strength. A complete change had passed over her nature, and her parents rejoiced in the result, without inquiring too closely into the cause which had produced it.

Gordon Gray did not go abroad. The ties which bound him to his native land were too strong to be broken; and so it came that frequenting art galleries and studios, he became familiar with a fair young face which attracted him by the earnestness imprinted on every feature. It grew to be one of his pleasures at last to stand by Lilla Burton's side, and watch her at her beautiful work, giving freely a friend's kindly criticism.

The Christmas time was drawing nigh, and Lilla's heart, overflowing with its debt of gratitude, determined to make a suitable acknowledgment to her kind benefactress. Hour by hour she laboured patiently. When the Christmas week dawned the work was completed, and was a portrait of Lena Lyell, dressed in a dark velvet costume, and holding in her hand some crocuses. It had been sketched from memory, for Lilla had once seen her thus; but the tender, truthful look was of a loftier character than had been seen in the Lena of old; though it was no exaggeration now. A loving heart had dictated and a loving hand had executed the portrait, and rarely had a more beautiful face beamed forth from a canvas.

As she put the last touch to the picture and leaned back with a sigh of satisfaction Gordon Gray, who had been absent from town, entered.

In her absorption Lilla did not perceive him till he spoke.

"Heavens, what a likeness!" he exclaimed. "Only if possible even more beautiful. Tell me, Lilla," he cried, in agitation, "is this only a fancy piece, or is it a real portrait?"

"It is a real portrait," answered Lilla, regarding him with surprise. "Do you know her? It is the face of Lena Lyell, my dearest friend, the noblest woman I ever knew."

She spoke with enthusiasm, and while her visitor listened in astonishment and admiration the whole story came out.

A great revolution had taken place in Gordon Gray's heart. Even to himself he would not before acknowledge that the old love still lingered; but it needed but this breath of praise from a woman's lips to fan the smouldering embers into a brilliant flame. When they parted it was with a firm resolve in his heart to pay his sister a visit, and see for himself if time had indeed wrought such wondrous changes.

What the result of his observations was may be inferred from the fact that Lena Lyell is now and has been for many years his happy wife. In her sunlit home she hears of the fame and honour which her protégée has acquired, of the wealth that has poured in upon her, and she thanks the power which turned her feet from the paths of folly and selfishness, and in teaching her to labour for others brought true happiness to her worldly heart.

F. B.

**THE ZEBRA AS A DRAUGHT ANIMAL.**—It had hitherto been thought impossible to domesticate the zebra, and train it to render any service as a beast of draught or burden. For some time past the Paris Jardin d'Acclimatation has had a carriage drawn by those animals, and although their action in harness was somewhat unsteady, they showed exemplary docility. A further progress has now been made, and one may be seen carrying children on its back round the gardens. The victory over a nature believed to be indomitable was, however, only obtained after the most patient efforts, and two years' instruction was necessary to arrive at the desired result.

**PRICE OF BREAD IN ITALY.**—In these days of high prices it will not be uninteresting to know what is being paid for the first necessities of life in other countries. From a report recently published by the town council of Milan, it appears that the price of bread in that city is 62 cents per kilogram, though one bakery belonging to a limited company is selling at 60 cents. In the suburbs, beyond the limits of the octroi, the price is 58 cents per kilogram. At Venice, the price is 66 cents; Mantua, 64; at Florence, the best bread is sold at 63 cents, whilst that of second quality at 57; Brescia, 60 cents; at Genoa the price,

generally speaking, is 62, though some bakers, under engagement to the municipality, charge only 58; at Rome and Naples, fancy bread is sold at 65, white bread 57, common 47; at Turin, the price is 55 for best, and 50 for second quality.

#### OUR ENGLISH SURNAMES.\*

ALL the most familiar surnames except Smith—a surname derived from occupation—are to be found in the class which bears evident marks of the influence that personal or Christian names have exercised upon it. In the whole "Post Office Directory" there are no names that can be compared for frequency with Jones or Johnson, or even Thompson. Jones or Johnson, both of course derived from John, we believe, carry the day in that publication against Smith. The process by which such surnames arose is simple, and, indeed, is in full force in the north of Europe at the present day. In the days when there were no real surnames in any country in Europe, and in countries where none exist at the present time, the surname of the son is invariably that of the father with "son" added to it. Thus, in Sweden, if a man named John has a son who is christened Peter, that son will be called Peter Johnson, and if he again has a son and calls him John, his surname will be John Peterson.

These shifting surnames are still prevalent in northern countries, but, though it lingered, at all events till lately in parts of Wales, this fashion of nomenclature has died out in these islands, and when the shifting surnames ceased, not only the immediate progeny, but all the descendants of such a John would take the name of Johnson for their surname. This process, simple as it may seem, has been wonderfully enlarged and complicated by the inevitable variations in the pronunciation and form of almost every baptismal name. Thus, to take the case of David: from this not only came Davidson, but Dawe, Dawson and Dawes; from Isaac, Hikke, Holskon and Hicks, and from Walter, Watts, Watson and many others. But this is not all, for to these a large addition was made by nursery pet names and diminutives of endearment, out of which we not only get such form as Johnnie, Teddy and Charley, but a whole host of "kins," as Simpkins, Jenkins, Wilkins and Watkins; from Simon, John, William and Walter.

To show how such surnames multiplied when the increased population in the 11th and 12th centuries rendered some such devices absolutely necessary to distinguish man from man, we have only to see the changes which may be rung on three not very common Christian names, Roger, Ralph and Hugh. From the first we get Rogers, Rodgers and Rogerson; from Hodge the nicknames of Roger, Hodgkins, Hotchkins, Hoskins, Hodgkinson, Hodgson and Hodson. From Ralph, of whom there were no less than 38 in Domesday, we get our Ralls, Rolfs, Rawos, Rawsons, Rawlins, Rawlings, Rawlinsons, Rollins, Rollinsons, Rawkins, Rappkins and Raprons. From Hugh and its misspellings, as that notable one of the Dairymples, Hew, we have many surnames, the most common of which are Huggins, Hutehins, Hutehinson, Hugginson, Hullet, Hewlet, Huet, Hewet, Hewetson, Hewitt, Howson, Hughes and Hewson; besides which, in Wales, the Norman patronymic frequently assumes the form of Pugh.

Ever since the Conquest the race for popularity among Christian names in England has been greatest between John and William. In the age after the arrival of the Normans William was the more common Christian name. In "Domesday," for instance, there are 68 Williams, 48 Roberts and 28 Walters, but only 10 Johns. In 1173, at a banquet given at the Court of Henry II., it was commanded that none but those of the name of William should dine at it, and accordingly 120 Williams, all knights, sat down to table. In Edward I.'s time this disproportion had become less marked, for in a list of Wiltshire names, containing 588, there are 92 Williams to 88 Johns. In a century after John had outstripped its competitor. In 1347, out of 133 common councilmen for London 35 were Johns, the next highest name being William, with 17, while Thomas, in consequence of the canonisation of Becket, springs into notoriety with 15. In 1385 the guild of St. George, at Norwich, in a total of 376 names, possessed 128 Johns to 47 Williams and 41 Thomases. From this period, owing to the two saints who bore that name, and despite the aversion felt for the worthless monarch who had also borne it, John retained its supremacy, and to this circumstance we owe the name of John Bull, as well as the Jean Goddam by which the French called us all through the Middle Ages. William retained a sturdy second place. It fared worst at the hands of the Puritans, who rejected it as a Pagan name with horror; but it recovered its ascen-

\* Our English Surnames. By Charles Wareing Barclay, M.A.

dancy with William of Orange and the Protestant Revolution, and it now stands, as it did eight centuries ago, at the head of all the names in our baptismal registers, while John has again sunk into the second place.

The surnames taken from names of places in England are numerous. In these, as might be supposed *a priori*, we find that the nobility and landed gentry took their surnames from their estates and manors, or even from the towns and cities which belonged to them, while their vassals and dependents were called from humbler positions, as John Abovebrook or Thomas Behind-water, or William At-lane, or At-brook, or At-well, or Symme At-style, out of the last two of which have come our Styles and Atwells; just in the same way a large family of Woods and Atwoods have come from the local appellation *atle wode*, while William Atto-Lea—that is, of the pasture—can boast a large posterity of Leighs, Leghs, and Lees, as well as Atlays and Attleas. We have not time to dwell on this, but pass on, only remarking that Mr. Bardale is wrong in saying that the Esterlings, from whom we get our Sterling money and the surname Sterling, were Dutchmen or Hollanders; they were the traders of the Great Hansa of the East Sea or Baltic, the capital of whose commerce was at first Wisby, in the island of Gottland, and afterwards Lubeck.

We pass on to the history of surnames derived from office and rank, such as Butler, Kitchiner, Latimer, Sewer, and Napper. From ventry and the chase we have the fine old English names Bowyer, Fletcher, and Stringer, with which may be mentioned Arrowsmith, and Tipper, the one denoting the man who made and the other him who pointed and tipped the arrows. From the greenwood we have also our Forsters and Parkers and Warriners or Warners, while the original Saxon Woodreeve has a long progeny of Woodruffs and Woodrows, not to mention Woodwards and Woodards.

Next come surnames derived from occupations in town and country, Smith heading the list in both. Hence come our Tilers and Thatchers and Slaters; our Carpenters and Wheelwrights and Cartwrights, with numberless others. We have said that Smith heads the list of occupations both in town and country, and so it well may, for it meant originally any kind of artificer, and not merely a worker in metal, but even in wood. There were blacksmiths, who wrought in iron; brownsmiths, who worked in copper; whitesmiths, in tin and latien; and redsmiths, in gold—our modern goldsmiths. Besides these there were shoemiths, another term for farriers, knivesmiths, or cutlers, and locksmiths, as we use the term now. In general the information as to occupations in town and country might be thrown under one head, as in many cases they are identical, but as a distinction it may be stated that the country names are in many cases rather concerned with the production of the raw material, while these in the town are taken from trades and manufactures.

The Normans were addicted to nicknames, but it was only a part of the inheritance which they brought with them from the north, for no race on earth were so given to nicknames as the Northerners long before the days of Rollo. Nor for that matter were the Anglo-Saxons far behind them, for the Saxon Chronicle is full of instances of such names. In those days if a man had any striking peculiarity either of mind or person, if his legs were long, or his neck short, his hair red, or his teeth black, he was called longhanks or bullneck or redhair or blacktooth, to distinguish him, in the days when there were no surnames, from others of his generation who might have what we should now call the same Christian name. Thus in the Saxon kings we had Edmund Ironside and Ethelred the Unready; in Norway, Harold Fairhair and Harold Hardrada, and in Denmark Harold Blinethooth—that is, blacktooth—because he had a waxy, discoloured front tooth.

**INTERESTING DISCOVERY IN WHITCHURCH PARISH CHURCH.**—The discovery of the bones of John Talbot, first Earl of Salop, in Whitchurch parish church, has excited general interest. It was known that a silver urn containing the embalmed heart of the great soldier was found among the ruins of the ancient church, and that it had been deposited beneath the porch or vestibule, but there appears to have been no record or even tradition in the parish of his bones having been brought over from France and buried within the sacred precincts. Recently, however, while the workmen were removing the recumbent figure of Talbot from its position in the south aisle, preparatory to the restoration of the side and canopy, it became evident that there was something of the nature of a coffin immediately beneath the effigy. On closer examination bones were apparent, the woodwork having fallen into decay. The remarkable fact that each bone was carefully wrapped in

cerements, and the position in which they were found, places it beyond a doubt that they are none other than the bones of the great Talbot, who fell at Châtillon, in France; A.D. 1453. At the back of the skull was an opening, apparently caused by a battle-axe. It is expected there will be a public interment of the remains in the porch, where the heart is believed to lie.

#### SEDENTARY HABITS.

A MAN may be healthy without being strong; but all health tends more or less towards strength, and all disease is weakness. Now, any one may see in nature that things grow big simply by growing; this growth is a constant and habitual exercise of vital or vegetative force, and whatever checks or diminishes the action of this force—say harsh winds or frost—will stop the growth and stunt the production. Let the student, therefore, bear in mind that sitting on a chair, leaning over a desk, poring over a book cannot possibly be the way to make his body grow. The blood can be made to flow and the muscles to play freely only by exercise, and if that exercise is not taken nature will not be mocked.

Every young student ought to make a sacred resolution to move about in the open air at least two hours every day. If he does not do this, cold feet, the clogging of the wheel of the internal parts of the fleshly frame, and various shades of stomaclic and cerebral discomfort, will not fall in due season to inform him that he has been sinning against nature, and if he does not mend his course as a bad boy he will certainly be flogged, for nature is never—like some soft-hearted human masters—over merciful in her treatment.

But why should a student indulge so much in the lazy and unhealthy habit of sitting? A man may think as well standing as sitting, often not a little better; and as for reading in these days, when the most weighty books may be had cheaply in the lightest form, there is no necessity why a person should be bending his back and doubling his chest merely because he happens to have a book in his hand. A man will read a play or poem far more naturally and effectively while walking up and down the room than when sitting sleepily in a chair. Sitting, in fact, is a slovenly habit, and ought not to be indulged. But when a man does sit, or must sit, let him at all events sit erect, with his back to the light, and a full, free projection of the breast. Also, when studying languages, or reading fine passages of poetry, let him read as much as possible aloud; a practice recommended by Clement of Alexandria, and which will have the double good effect of strengthening that most important vital element, the lungs, and training the ear to the perfection of vocal distinction, so stupidly neglected in many of our public schools.

#### FACETIÆ.

**THE REVERSE OF THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.**—A school in which very few members of society are brought up—a charity school.—*Punch.*

**THE BATTLE AND THE BREWER.**—The fact that the Oxford boat got ahead of the Cambridge where the river was somewhat rough, proves that it was: wall for the Light Blue that it blew light.—*Fun.*

**QUESTION FOR NAVAL EXAMINATIONS.**  
Q: "Can you give any other name for a ship's cut-water?"

A: "Yes, A see-saw."—*Punch.*

**THE RAIL (IN)-CONVENIENCE!**  
Pity poor Miss Stilt! The heel of her irreproachable little boot is tightly wedged in the groove of the tramway, and one of those ugly, lumbering, roomy, comfortable, troublesome cars is rapidly approaching!—*Fun.*

**SYMPATHETIC!**  
*Imaginative Undergraduate:* "My uncle has just died, sir, and I should be much obliged for a few days' leave to attend his funeral."

*President (who thinks the case scarcely sufficiently urgent):* "Very well, Mr. Blank, you may go—you may go—but I wish it was a nearer relative!"

*Sergeant O'Leary:* "Double! Left! Right! What the blazes, Pat Rooney, d'ye mane by not doublin' wid the squad?"

*Pat:* "Shure, sergeant, 'twasn't a fair start!"—*Punch.*

**LOOKING AT IT PRACTICALLY.**  
*Governess:* "What did your godfathers and godmothers then for you? (A pause. Question repeated; another pause.)"

*Elder Brother:* "Oh if you please, Miss Elderberry, Charlie don't know; my godpa brought me a spoon and fork, but his godpa didn't do anything."—*Fun.*

ONE idea men are always very tedious. A bore

that talks nothing but geology is just as great a bore as the bore who talks nothing but horse. One of the most tedious beings we ever got acquainted with was a professor of one of our colleges. He would talk all day about the circulating fluid of grasshoppers, and preach by the week on the germinal properties of a geranium.

The teacher of an infant school had her attention called to one little fellow listening to what she said. She had been teaching her class the elements of history, and wishing to see if he knew what she had been talking about, she suddenly asked: "Johnny, who killed King Rufus?" With a surprised look, he replied: "Why, I didn't know he was dead!"

A WITTY little old maid of Aberdeen, when taken to the buffet for refreshment by the tall gentleman who had been dancing with her, said archly, "You know we small women look hopefully up to Hymen." After a melancholy pause, elevating his glass, he responded thus: "I will give you a sentiment, Miss Mac—, 'May our old maids be like our fire-engines—ever ready, but never wanted.'"

**"BUSINESS!"**  
*Bath-Chairman:* "I s'pose the Duke of Edinboro' and his missis will be by directly?"

*Policeman:* "No, they won't. They ain't in town."

*Bath-Chairman:* "Ain't they? I say, if that old lady in my chair asks you, say 'you don't know,' 'cause she's a waitin' to see 'em, and I'm engaged by the hour!"—*Punch.*

**BROUGHT TO HIS BEARINGS.**  
*Lady of House:* "Well, Charles, you seem to prefer one another's society to ours."

*Charles:* "Very sorry, my dear, no notion it was so late. Got talking politics, you know, Eastern question, attitude of Russia, don't you know, and or—er—"

*Miss Becky:* "Discussing the Sublime Porte, Cousin Charles, I suppose you mean."—*Fun.*

**THE ROUND OF THE STUDIOS.**  
*Affable Stranger:* "Good morning, Mr. Mc'Gill! I haven't the pleasure of your acquaintance, but a brother of mine met you, some years ago, at a garden-party, and I thought you wouldn't mind my calling to see your pictures, and—er—bringing some cousins of my wife's!"

[Our artist bows low, to dissemble the too exuberant rapture that beams all over his toll-tale countenance.—*Punch.*

**NOT THE SAME THING.**—A handsome carriage and pair were standing at the door of a fashionable West-end shop, into which the ladies, who had just alighted, had entered, on the usual errand of tasteful expenditure, and a gentleman remained in the carriage reading. The vehicle, the horses, the livery and appointments were all of a superior order, and attracted the special attention of two friends, who stood conversing at a neighbouring shop door. "Ah!" said one to the other; "that's something handsome now. How I should like to be driven out in such a handsome equipage as that!" "Well," replied the other, coolly, "you have only to step in at once, and you will be driven out immediately, I warrant you."

**THE GIRLS' SCHOOL IN THE KITCHEN.**—"A Cambridgehire Vicar," writing to the *Times*, truly remarks that "the art of cookery, under the auspices of Mr. Buckmaster, is now assuming the place which it ought to hold among the accomplishments of English ladies." It is, indeed, satisfactory to see the agitation for Women's Rights accompanied by a movement in the cultivation of their duties. Let the accomplishment of cooking be as generally studied by girls as that of music is, and the results of learning the one will probably prove in general a good deal more satisfactory than we find those of instruction in the other. The majority of our wives and daughters will be enabled to dress a dinner as well as they can dress themselves, and perhaps better than they dress their hair; and there will no longer be room for the unkind, if not altogether un-called-for remark, that there are not many bread-winners whose wives are able to make bread-sauce.—*Punch.*

**THE CAPTAIN'S GEESE.**  
An old whaling captain, who had spent the whole prime of his life on the ocean with but indifferent success, having scraped together a thousand pounds, retired from the sea, moved into the country with his family and bought a small farm.

One of his neighbours said to him soon after he settled on the farm:

"Captain K, you've got a nice pond on your place, and you ought to have a good large flock of geese. It's a grand place to keep 'em, and they'll be profitable to you."

"Yes, I think they will," said the captain. "I've got some nice ones to sell ye," continued the kind neighbour. "You come over and pick 'em out yourself."

So the captain selected a suitable number, making



his choice as he would among a school of whales when "brought to," or as a boy would from a basket of apples.

In the spring following he happened to be visiting at the farm of another neighbour, and among other things inspected the geese, making comparisons in his mind highly favourable to his own judgment.

"Don't think your birds are so handsome as mine," he remarked. "Do you have any eggs yet?"

"Oh, yes. They have been laying freely for this month or more."

"Well, I don't know how 'tis," said Captain K. "I've got the handsomest flock that I've seen anywhere this season—picked 'em out one by one, from my neighbour Jones's flock, and I feed 'em high too. But not an egg have they laid yet. I only wish you would come over and see 'em. Perhaps you can give an idea how to manage 'em."

His friend did "come over and see 'em" the next day, and, as soon as he could speak for laughter, he enlightened the ancient mariner as to the cause of the nonproductiveness by informing him that they were—all ganders!

#### A GREEN WITNESS.

In a breach of promise case, a green Irish lad employed by the defendant, a dentist, was put in the box to prove the use, on defendant's part, of divers endearments and love passages, said to have transpired in his office, when the following examination took place:

"Michael, do you know the plaintiff?"

"Sur-r?"

"Do you know that lady? Have you ever seen her before?"

"Is it the old or the young'un, you mane, sur?"

"Mother and daughter were both in court."

"The young one, sir, of course."

"Well, thin, mebbe I might see her once."

"Oh, you have seen her once—where was that?"

"Well, indade, I couldn't tell, sir, av it wasn't in the office; out I'd know by her teeth."

The lady was directed to exhibit her teeth, which she did.

"Well, sir, what do you say now;—was that the lady?"

"It was, sur-r; I'd know her bee the tushes!" (Laughter.)

"Have you seen her in the office more than once?"

"Well, indade-an' I couldn't tell; mebbe I might, or might not. I've a powerful bad memory that way."

"Well, sir, when you did see her, was it on the day spoken of? Was your master in the room? and if so, state what took place between the parties."

"Well, thin, when I knew he was, sur-r, sure I wudn't say agin it, but I seen nothin' take place o'ny the cat, the cratur, playin' wid the string of her shoe."

"Did the lady, on that day, come there for the purpose of having an operation performed, or were they merely engaged in conversation? Answer me, sir, without hesitation."

"Well, thin, 'tisn't asy for the likes o' me to say. Mebbe your honour 'ud ax the lady—she might know better nor me."

"I ask you, sir, did you see an operation performed?"

"Well, thin, av I knew what it was, I might tell. Is it pullin' a tooth, yees mane?"

"Yes, pulling, or filling, or anything else. Did he kiss her?"

"Well, thin, I didn't hear 'em."

"Hear him! Did you see him?"

"Dade I did."

"Ah, I thought so. You saw him kiss her?"

"Dade I did not!"

"Did you not just say you saw him?"

"Dade I did."

"Well, saw him kiss her?"

"In troth, no!"

"No trifling, sir. I begin to suspect you're not so green as you pretend to be. Now, sir, without equivocation, state what you mean. Did you, or did you not see him, on that day kiss that lady?"

"Well, thin, I did see 'em, but not kiss the lady; because whin she was in it, he wasn't."

"Did you not tell me just now, you knew he was in the room, and you wouldn't say agin it?"

"No, in troth! but whin I knew he was, I wouldn't say agin it."

"Sit down, sir. May it please the court, it is impossible to elicit anything from the abominable stupidity of that witness."

The court coughed, and scratched its roof, smiled a judicial smile, and coincided with the opinion—in part. Michael was dismissed.

**THE ASHANTKE UMBRELLA.**—This trophy of the Ashantee War was presented to Her Majesty the Queen, at Windsor Castle, on the 16th of March, by Lieutenant the Hon. H. Wood, 10th Hussars, Aide-

de-Camp to Sir Garnet Wolseley, as a humble tribute of dutiful respect and affection from Her Majesty's Military and Naval Forces which took part in the war. It measures 11 feet from the lower part of the stick to the top; when open the diameter is 7 feet 5 inches; the length of the covering, when shut, is 6 feet 2 inches. The material is velvet, partly crimson and partly black, in different-sized squares, with gold trimmings. Four lion's claws, roughly carved and gilt, are symmetrically placed, and some square pieces of various objects are distributed all round as fetiches or charms. They consist of the skin of animals with the hair on, skin of serpents, and one small piece of scarlet woollen material with a white bordering. These are supposed to be sacred emblems, and to have received some peculiar endowment from the priests. This state umbrella is a sort of royal standard, and probably embodies for the people of Ashantee, at the same time, a royal and religious character of the highest order. The stick of the umbrella is of the plainest wood, without any attempt at ornamentation. The umbrella is used on all state occasions, and is emblematical of the power of the sovereign.

#### AT THE LAST.

THE stream is calmest when it nears the tide,  
The flowers the sweetest at the eventide,  
And birds most musical at the close of day,  
And saints divinest when they pass away.

Morning is lovely, but a holier charm  
Lies folded close in evening's robes of balm;  
And weary man must even love the best,  
For morning calls to toil, but night to rest.

She comes from Heaven, and her wings do bear  
A holy fragrance, like the breath of prayer;  
Footsteps of angels follow in her trace,  
To shut the weary eye of day in peace.

All things are hushed before her as she throws  
O'er earth and sky her mantle of repose;  
There is a calm, a beauty and a power,  
That morning knows not, in the evening hour.

"Until the evening" we must weep and toil,  
Plough life's stern furrow, dig the woody soil,  
Tread with sad feet our rough and thorny way,  
And bear the heat and burden of the day.

Oh! when our sun is setting, may we glide,  
Like summer evening, down the golden tide,  
And leave behind us, as we pass away,  
Sweet, starry twilight round our sleeping clay.

#### GEMS.

MANY have withstood the frowns of the world, but its smiles and caresses hugged them to death.

HUMAN NATURE is so constituted that all see and judge better in the affairs of other men than in their own.

THE most valuable thing in the world is Time, and yet people waste it as they do water, most of them letting it run full head, and even the most prudent let it drizzle.

If you wish to live the life of a man, and not of a fungus, be social, be brotherly, be charitable, be sympathetic, and labour earnestly for the good of your kind.

WHAT greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel that they are joined for life, to strengthen each other in all labour, to rest on each other in all sorrow, to minister to each other in all pain, to be one with each other in silent, unspeakable memories at the moment of the last parting.

To every man there are many, many dark hours—hours when he feels inclined to abandon his best enterprise; hours when his heart's dearest hopes appear delusive; hours when he feels himself unequal to the burden—when all his aspirations seem worthless. Let no one think that he alone has dark hours. They are the common lot of humanity; they are the touchstone to try whether we are current coin or not.

#### HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

**DOUGHNUTS.**—One egg, one cup of sugar, two cups of sour milk, one spoonful of cream if the milk is not very rich, one teaspoonful of soda, little salt, nutmeg, flour enough to roll.

**BAKED INDIAN PUDDING.**—Four eggs, one quart of sweet milk, five large teaspoonfuls of Indian meal, nutmeg and sugar to the taste. Boil the milk and scald the Indian meal in it, then let it cool before adding the eggs. Bake three-quarters of an hour. Eat with butter or sweet sauce.

**MUTTON CHOPS FOR INVALIDS OR DELICATE CHILDREN.**—Nicely-trimmed mutton chops, put in a

covered jar, with a little water, pepper and salt, and cooked in a slow oven for three hours, form excellent food for an invalid or a delicate child, as the meat is not so hard as in the ordinary way of cooking.

**TO STEW SMOKED BEEF.**—The dried beef, for this purpose, must be fresh and of the very best quality. Cut it (or rather shave it) into very thin, small slices, with as little fat as possible. Put the beef into a skillet, and fill up with boiling water. Cover it, and let it soak or steep till the water is cold. Then drain off that water, and pour on some more; but merely enough to cover the chipped beef, which you may season with a little pepper. Set it over the fire, and (keeping on the cover) let it stew for a quarter of an hour. Then roll a few bits of butter in a little flour, and add it to the beef, with the yolk of one or two beaten eggs. Let it stew five minutes longer. Take it up on a hot dish, and send it to table.

#### STATISTICS.

IN Birmingham the number of steel pens made weekly is about 38,000 gross, or 14,112,000 separate pens.

The extent of railway opened in France at the close of 1873 was 11,603 miles. Of this aggregate, 543 miles were opened in the course of 1873. The amount of revenue collected upon the French railways last year was 32,064,651*l.* as compared with 30,726,763*l.* in 1872.

The number of American manufacturing establishments in 1870 was 252,142, in 1860, 140,433; hands employed in 1870, 2,063,996, in 1860, 1,311,246; capital in 1870, 2,118,208,769 *dols.*, in 1860, 1,109,825 *dols.*; wages in 1870, 775,584,843 *dols.*, in 1860, 378,878,966; value of raw materials in 1870, 2,488,427,242, in 1860, 1,031,665,092; value of products in 1870, 4,202,325,443, in 1860, 1,835,861,676. Thus while the gain in population has been 23 per cent., the increase in manufacturing capital has been over 100, in the value of goods produced, 125 per cent.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

**M. BLONDIN** had another narrow escape in March last. The tight-rope snapped just before his ascent. It is reported that a little chapel is to be added to Clarence House for the performance of the Greek service for the Duchess of Edinburgh.

The salary of the Controller of the Household of Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh has been doubled.

**SIR J. KARSLAKE** will most probably resign his official appointment. His physicians think that if he persists in reading he may become totally blind.

We learn that a number of French ladies, under the conduct of the Marquise de Gallifet, will present their homage to the Empress Eugénie on the 5th instant, which is Her Majesty's birthday.

**MR. JOHN W. WILSON**, who presented the Louvre with two fine pictures by Constable, after having outbid the French Government at the auction at which they were sold, has been made a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour.

**EARLY NIGHTINGALES.**—A flight of nightingales arrived in time to keep the Easter holiday: in the shrubberies and ornamental grounds in Clapham Park, and warbled their melodious notes to the numerous listeners who had assembled.

A RECENT bicycle race of 300 miles, from Sheffield to Plymouth, ended in favour of Wilson, who arrived at two p.m. rather tired, but not exhausted. Cann's machine broke down at Tewkesbury. The journey occupied four days and a half.

THERE are 7,000 pictures entered for the Academy of Painting Exhibition in Paris, being three times more than last season. Each painting costs at least 30 francs for the canvas, and four times that for the rich frames; not more than 1,000 paintings deserve a serious look. What a love's labour lost!

THOSE persons who saw the Shah last summer may be interested in learning that His Majesty has recalled his eldest son from Tauris, in order to coach him up in the new ways which Nasred-Din has brought back from the West. The second son has succeeded his brother as governor of Tauris.

**THE DUTIES OF CAVALRY IN WARFARE.**—The Russian Ministry of War has offered three prizes, of 5,000, 3,000, and 2,000 roubles respectively, for the best writings on the duties of cavalry in warfare at the present day. The books or essays need not necessarily be written in Russian. The one obtaining the first prize will be printed and published by the government, and any profit accruing from its sale will be handed over to the author in addition to the prize, aspirants for which are invited to apply for particulars to the general staff.

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"Stokes's Rapid Writing," 3rd ed. One Shilling. Houlston and Sons, 7, Paternoster Buildings, London; H. and C. Treacher, 1, North Street, Brighton, etc.—Many curious things connected with the Art of Writing are to be found in this little volume—such as, for instance, a collection of Egyptian hieroglyphics with alphabet and numbers; a verse of the Bible containing all the letters of our alphabet; specimens of microscopic writing; a large number of flourished designs executed without taking the pen from the paper; illustrations of writing under difficulties occasioned by the oscillation of a train in swift motion in one case and in another by the substitution of a skewer for a pen; autographs of celebrated persons; anecdotes of famous writers, etc. The author enters into most minute particulars in his directions to those who desire to acquire or become more proficient in the chirographic art, furnishing his readers with many valuable hints and suggestions respecting matters directly and remotely connected with the subject of the work. Mr. Stokes liberally displays his versifying power throughout the book, and in a song entitled "The Engine Driver" gives us a glimpse of some musical talent by the composition of the melody as well as the words.

## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. P. (Exeter).—The letter with its enclosure reached us in due course.

W. R. B.—We observe your hesitation. To help you to decide is beyond our price.

S. H.—Probably you mistake; for the evidence of good faith should first proceed from you.

WM. F.—We have repeatedly said that we cannot undertake to answer correspondents through the post-office.

FRED R.—If the description had not been too indefinite, the tenor of the communication would have been objectionable.

G. A.—As yet the time for decision has been insufficient. If you do not soon hear you may conclude that we have been unable to comply with your wish.

M. C.—The verses are not so very bad. The principal objection to them is that they are hyper-sentimental, a quality which is at a discount in this age.

MAURICE N.—By an accident your letter has been torn somewhat. We think, however, we can decipher it sufficiently to say that it arrived too late to answer your purpose.

DAISY DOW.—A new edition of Tennyson's Poems has just been announced, at the price of half-a-crown a volume. You will find the work on sale at the railway bookstalls. We think that in all respects you write nicely.

J. A. T.—There might very likely be a difference of opinion upon the subject of age. The friends of a lady are accustomed to think that her husband should be seven or eight years older than his wife, and the lady herself is often of the same opinion.

R. F. and B. W.—The handwriting is excellent, it is of a description which is more often in use amongst townsmen than farm-labourers. The latter, from the nature of their occupation, often write nicely enough, but still with a heavy hand.

ARTHUR B.—The case may be as you state, and we have no wish to throw any doubt on your assertion; it is, however, an unusual circumstance to find a young man of twenty, who therefore has not yet attained his majority, in possession of so large an income as three thousand a year.

GEORGE.—As the article is costly as well as brittle it should, we think, be saved from the hazard it is sure to run in the hands of an amateur. The better plan is to employ some one whose especial business it is to renovate such things. Such an one would be responsible for the execution of your order in a workmanlike manner.

A. G. and B. R.—Possibly you will be correct in considering the refusal to insert whimsical. Such a whim may, however, be excusable under circumstances. You can, if you care to, avoid the consequences by each writing separately. A lady may be willing to confide in one, but often abhors the notion of her friend's friend having knowledge of the secret.

DOES HIS LOVE ME?—We are always glad to hear from you, and are pleased to find you are amused. A lady could decline to dance with a gentleman without giving any definite reason. If she said that she thought he should not join in the next dance, he would understand her refusal. We like your handwriting much. The French word *debut* is pronounced like the sounds ordinarily attached to the English letters "day-bo."

L. E. P.—Your verses are a sad reminiscence of a time which is often repite with brightness; they are perhaps good enough for publication, because it is well to pass now and then from gay to grave. A great improvement might be effected merely by changing the title. "To

Morrow," we think, would be a more appropriate heading and one which would less disappoint expectation than the words you have chosen as a name to your poetry.

FLORA P.—The punishment of the rod is still we believe to be found in the Russian penal code; but we think that political offenders are not amenable to this punishment; neither is it possible that any members of the higher classes of society could receive such an infliction. Authoritative writers on Russian law state that no other European government is so much open to the charge of having made one law for the rich and another for the poor.

H. C. (Fustian Cutter).—1. Subject to the regulations of the courts a barrister has a right to plead in any of the courts of England, the Colonies or India. 2. A queen's counsel has precedence before an ordinary barrister. 3. The degree of Q.C. is conferred by Her Majesty's letters patent, and is usually granted on application by a barrister of about fifteen years' standing. 4. The degree of barrister is conferred by any of the four Inns of Court after a person has conformed himself to the rules of the Inn of which he has become a member.

THE EXCISE.—In answer to numerous correspondents who have addressed us about this branch of public work, we reprint for their information the following official announcement: An open competition for 150 situations as second-class assistant of excise will be held on the 13th of June, 1874, in London, Edinburgh, Dublin and various other places. Age 19 to 21. The necessary form of application will be forwarded to any one who applies at once (enclosing an addressed foolscap envelope) to the Secretary Civil Service Commission, London, S.W.

Geo. WILLIAM.—The statistics are not given in the form you desire. We think that emigration is to be recommended in the case of a young, healthy, steady man, and if he can persuade a young woman of similar character to accompany him as his wife, so much the better. You would do a prudent thing to throw what are called political and politico-economical considerations overboard; decide upon the course you take solely in reference to your own capacity, circumstances, and such sober hopes as the common sense you possess will allow you to entertain.

## ANEAR THE GARDEN GATE.

Anear the garden gate I stood,  
And clasped her little hand in mine;  
I whispered, "Heaven is very good,  
To give the oak its clinging vine;  
And I am but a gnarled, rugged tree,  
Yet fain would I be gaily led by thee."  
The warm, bright sun had slowly sunk to rest,  
And twilight crimsoned all the glowing west,  
As softly to my beating heart I pressed  
The maiden loved so well.  
And then I bent her soft, low words to hear;  
But what she whispered shyly in my ear  
I surely shall not tell.

Anear the garden gate I kissed  
Her lips, so tempting, full and sweet,  
And said, "Though man has Eden missed,  
In loving life is still complete.  
This proud, glad world would be a desert drear,  
Were there no springing flowers its paths to cheer."  
And as the flowers to meet the sun arise,  
She raised to mine her lustrous, sparkling eyes,  
And "neath love's sun we walked in paradise,  
My darling maid and I.  
I know I kissed her lips so ripe and red,  
But yet I cannot tell one word she said—  
I surely shall not try.

L. S. U.

G. T. M.—The first thing an aspirant to the degree of "M. D." has to do is to pass some examination in general knowledge. Of such an examination the matriculation examination of the London University is an example, and of this you can obtain a notion by perusing the papers published in the "London University Calendar." After this the student pursues his course in some of the schools attached to the hospitals. During this time and after he has to pass examinations in anatomy and other subjects. The career is laborious and should not be inconsiderately entered upon.

BON B.—Your letter is one of those frank epistles that always charm, and that seem to merit a very candid reply. Yet is the part of "a candid friend" one very onerous to undertake. Perhaps the best way such an one could help you would be by the inculcation of those everyday maxims:

"There are more things in heaven and earth  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

And

"Nothing is denied to well-directed labour."

Now if in the spirit in which these are written you would practically try to accomplish your object, that is, if you would inquiringly act and do, you would soon arrive at a better elucidation of the subject than any we can possibly give.

T. L., twenty-eight, with small income and business, desires to correspond with a lady of business habits.

LUCK, tall and fair, would like to marry a young man of loving disposition; a tradesman preferred.

LOUISA, twenty-three, medium height, fair, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be affectionate; a tradesman preferred.

B. O. W., twenty-nine, tall, dark, fond of home, and considered good looking. Respondent must be fair, educated, and about twenty.

MARY ANN, twenty-one, tall, fair, and considered good looking, wishes to correspond with a young man of the working class.

BENJAMIN, twenty, five, dark, and considered good looking. Respondent must be pretty, dark, loving, and not more than twenty.

WILLIE, twenty-seven, good looking, affectionate, and in a respectable position, wishes to correspond with a young lady of fortune. He considers that his love, attention, and appearance would amply repay her for her fortune. His complexion is dark.

HARRY CHARLES, twenty-four, five, nine, a gunner in the Royal Artillery, fair complexion, high hair, blue eyes, considered good looking, and of a loving disposition. He

spondent must be about the same age, affectionate, and good looking.

MAIRIE, thirty, a widow, would like to correspond with a city gentleman; she can speak French, is musical, has a business of her own, a little money, and is of a loving, cheerful disposition.

ANNIE, twenty-one, five, four, considered pretty, well educated, amiable, blue eyes, and has long golden hair, desires to correspond with a gentleman under forty, of good means.

THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER, thirty-six, medium height, brown hair, blue eyes, and would make a good wife; would like to correspond with a widower of forty, with a loving heart.

BONA FIDEM, thirty, tall, a gentleman in Government service abroad, fair, wishes to correspond with a pretty blonde, having money or income, with a view to an early marriage.

HARRY H., twenty-one, five, eleven, fair complexion, curly hair, and in a good position, wishes to correspond with a well-educated young lady who is of a loving disposition; age about seventeen.

LOUISA, eighteen, five, two, fair, brown hair, blue eyes, good looking, and loving, wishes to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-one who must be fond of home; a clerk preferred.

W. W., five, a gunner in the Artillery, fair complexion, light-brown hair, hazel eyes, considered good looking, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be tall, good looking, and make a loving wife.

A. S., twenty, five, six, dark eyes and hair, is a baker, would like to correspond with a young lady who has a little money, with a view to an early marriage, intending then to commence business.

WILLIE, nineteen, five, nine, with an income of 150*l.* per annum, desires to correspond with a young lady about sixteen or eighteen, who must be good looking, loving, and musical.

B. H. E., thirty, tall, and well-connected, desires to correspond with a tall gentleman somewhere about the same age, who must be loving, fond of home, and well-connected; a widower with one or two children preferred.

FLASHING LIGHT, nineteen, a signalman in the Royal Navy, dark-brown hair, blue eyes, and considered handsome, desires to correspond with a young lady about eighteen, who is fond of home, and thoroughly domesticated.

ROLL OF THE SEA, twenty-three, dark hair, whisks, and complexion, wishes to correspond with a young lady about twenty, with a view to marriage. Respondent must be tall, dark complexion, and of an affectionate disposition.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

ELIZABETH is responded to by—"F. M.," thirty, fair complexion, MARY MAY by—"Alpha," thirty-three, petite, dark, and in business.

GEORGE T. by—"Maude," who thinks she would meet his views; she is of a loving disposition, a good musician, fair, aged eighteen, five, eleven, in height.

RACHEL by—"James," thirty-five, tall, dark, an artisan in constant employment, a widower without children, affectionate, and fond of home.

ANNE by—"Ellis," who thinks she would make a good wife; she is dark, not very plain, good tempered, and has a little money.

FREDERICK by—"E. A.," twenty, five, eleven, dark hair, blue eyes, clear complexion, loving, fond of home, and thinks she is all that he requires.

LAST ROSE OF SUMMER by—"Q. Z.," who, living by himself on his own property, is in need of a wife. He would make a loving husband.

E. J. C. by—"Minnie S.," eighteen, who thinks that she fully answers to the description in the advertisement.

W. H. by—"Miss H.," twenty; and by—"Jennie H.," twenty, amiable, domesticated, thinks she will suit him, and would love a sailor.

CHARLES G. by—"Lizzie C.," twenty-six, medium height, rather dark, and domesticated; and by—"Bonny Bess," twenty-six, a widow, who thinks she is all that he requires.

LOVE'S MINNA by—"R. B. MoP.," twenty, five, six, a wood-carver, dark, passionately fond of music and dancing, and certain he would be a loving and kind husband to a true and faithful woman.

LADY PEARL by—"J. S. B.," twenty-six, five, nine, has an income of 200*l.* a year, and is of old and unquestionably good family; and by—"J. A. B.," thirty, tall, fair, of a cheerful, affectionate disposition, and quiet and very temperate habits, and has an income of 600*l.* per annum.

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London: Published for the Proprietor, at 334, Strand, by G. A. SMITH.